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LONGINES

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IN THIS EDITION

PAGE 6 :
PADDOCK NOTES FROM ZOLDER

PAGE 10 :
THE DAY SAFETY CAME 2 nd
Two accidents, one of them fatal, befell those overlooked F1 stalwarts, the mechanics. An inside view, by Eric Bhat, of the events that led to a start-line protest.

PAGE 16 :
EXTRA, EXTRA

Two stories of the sporting side to the Belgian GP: Nigel Mansell's outstanding performance, and the return to form of a Talbot-Ligier.

PAGE 18 :
THE FILM OF THE RACE

N° 33 (MONACO) WILL BE ON SALE ON JUNE 10.

Grand Prix international

PAGE 20 :
ZOLDER STATISTICS

PAGE 22 :
LAP BY LAP
Race placings in colour.

PAGE 24 :
POSTCARD FROM THE BELGIAN GP

PAGE 26 :
ZOLDER STORIES ...IN PICTURES

PAGE 34 :
FACE TO FACE WITH JACQUES LAFFITE

France's most popular F1 driver explains how the Talbot team is is overcoming its difficulties, and how things are beginning to go right again.

PAGE 38 :
PATRICK TAMBAY: IN TOUCH AGAIN

Dumped by McLaren in 1979, now he's back in favour. There have been a few changes, though: more motivation, a new state of mind, greater ambition. F1's Prince Charming is maturing, too.

PAGE 42 :
TECHNICAL: RENAULT'S RE30
In words and diagrams, our technical wizard Giorgio Piola unveils the latest Renault. A car on which the Regie places its championship hopes.

PAGE 44 :
A MATCHED PAIR

Things have not been the same between Carlos Reutemann and Alan Jones since the Brazilian GP. Keith Botsford on the cold war at Williams.

PAGE 47 :
PROST SCRIPTUM

by Alain Prost.

PAGE 48 :
OK, AYJAY?
by our favourite Aussie.

PAGE 49 :

COCKPITS

We delve into the nuts and bolts of a technical weekend.

The Formula One magazine is published 10 days after each Grand Prix.

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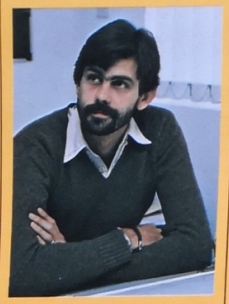
The paddock in Zolder

WILLIAMS AND BRABHAM: MURRAY MAKES HIS POINT

Mumps can be a most uncomfortable affliction, and it was a generally unhappy Gordon Murray who was forced to spend the Belgian GP weekend suffering at home with his face swollen to unrecognisable proportions. The Brabham designer had caught the disease from his young son a week before Zolder, exactly the wrong time for a team which is trying to maintain its technical advantage and also develop a new turbocar...



It goes without saying that Murray watched the race on TV, and equally understandable that he shared the bitter disappointment of his driver Nelson Piquet when the Brazilian was eliminated in the incident with Jones.. *"Alan Jones hit Nelson in the first four laps,"* he said: *"you could see the smoke as their wheels touched in the fast left-right complex. You know, Jones goes completely berserk when he's racing. He may have been in Formula 1 much longer than Nelson, but he's still making mistakes all over the place. Last year he made at least eight or nine serious mistakes, while Nelson made only two. I'm not at all surprised that Nelson was so angry afterwards: I'm sure that even Niki Lauda would have felt like that under the same circumstances."*

The reports that filtered back to Murray from Zolder about the technical novelties on rival cars made him just as frustrated. *"It looks as though virtually every important team at Zolder was using some sort of device to lock down their suspensions in the low position, which is forbidden by the rules.*

"From what I heard, the Belgian scrutineers just panicked, because they didn't know how to check these things. It can be very difficult to find the switches that are used to lock the suspension. The Williams team had all sorts of trouble with their hydropneumatic system sticking during their test before the Belgian GP, for example, and I'm pretty sure that they were using some sort of switch to hold it down."

It did not go unnoticed at Zolder that Piquet's Brabham was fitted with an enormous red anodised aluminium handle next to the gearlever. Some said it was Brabham's (illegal) pneumatic locking device. Others said its main purpose was to wind up rival engineers.

"By the time we get to Monaco, I expect we'll be using it to lock the suspension, just like all the teams which were cheating at Zolder," he says enigmatically. *"I want to put a big sign by the side of it, marked 'Suspension Height Correction Switch (as approved by Williams)' - and then we'll see what sort of reaction that creates."*

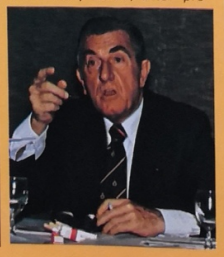
He doesn't sound as though he's joking, either...

BALESTRE: "WE ARE INVESTIGATING"

Speaking in Paris on the Tuesday after the Belgian GP, FISA President Jean-Marie Balestre defended the actions of the organisers at Zolder, but announced that a report of the incidents which occured before the start of the race would be considered by a meeting of the FISA Executive Comittee on June 18. Commenting on allegations that some drivers had ignored the yellow flags shown after the collision on the grid at the first start, Balestre said that FISA would examine "certain evidence" and that "appropriate action" would be taken. He underlined that it would be wrong for him to comment on decisions that had been taken by race officials in accordance with the required procedure.

Balestre was nevertheless able to confirm that Clerk of the Course Paul Gutman had *not* shown the red flag. *"The rules provide for an injured person to be attended to under the protection of the yellow flag"*, said Balestre. He added that it was probably a mistake that the drivers themselves had stopped racing spontaneously, but admitted that it was what he called "a happy mistake."

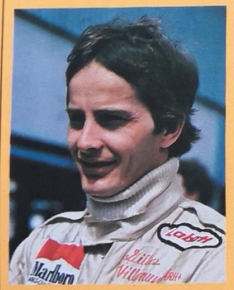
Asked to comment on the mechanics' protest the FISA President said that no written communication of any kind had been received from the mechanics. He was also surprised that the drivers chose to demand a maximum of 26 cars being admitted to practice, after pre-qualification, pointing out that they had made no coment at three previous Grands Prix in which as many as 29 cars had practised together.



Monsieur Balestre intimated that the drivers had been told at their briefing that the organisers would allow no more than five minutes for their protest. He was un able to explain why, subsequently, the 13 drivers who took part in the "demo" were reprimanded when the organisers' warning amounted to *de facto* recognition of the demonstration.

The Concord Agreement provides for the drivers to be represented on the Formula 1 Commission of FISA by the reigning world champion. It was pointed out to Monsieur Balestre that the current champion, Alan Jones, resigned some months ago from the Grand Prix Drivers' Association, and that he refuses, on principle, to take part in any political activities which do not immediately affect his profession as a racing driver.

WALTER WOLF: GOLD FOR FIGHTING SPIRIT



After the untimely death in 1971 of that great Swiss competitor Jo Siffert, it seemed that his fighting spirit should be commemorated in Grand Prix racing. As many fans wil remember, a "Prix Rouge et Blanc Joseph Siffert" was introduced by Philip Morris, with a special gold award after each race to recognise the driver who had shown the spirit most in keeping with Siffert's memory.

The prize was unfortunalety discontinued after five years, but now it's back. Reintroduced by the Myrurgia perfume company from Barcelona, it is being offered in the name of Walter Wolf, the one-time F1 team owner and sponsor whose name is used on a range of men's toiletries manufactured by Myrurgia.

The first race at which the Walter Wolf Trophy was awarded was the San Marino GP, in which a ten-man international jury decided that Gilles Villeneuve had shown the best "Siffert Spirit." Gilles accepted the Wolf award (a 300 medaillon made from gold mined in Wolf's native Austria) at a reception given for him in Belgium.

The jury's unanimous vote after the Belgian GP went to Nigel Mansell, who will receive his reward in Monte Carlo. There will be an overall winner at the end of the year, judged on the results of the season's voting. There is no doubt that this new trophy carries great prestige, for the rules require jury members not to vote if they feel that no drivers has shown the right qualities at any race.

JAN LAMMERS IS FEELING FINE, THANK YOU

There was a brand new ATS at Zolder, and Tommy "Slim" Borgudd did his best to get it on to the grid. But the best efforts of the Swedish musician were not

enough, and the team - now with almost exclusively German personnel - returned to its Bicester workshops without qualifying.

Jan Lammers, whose ATS place had been taken by Borgudd, watched the Belgian GP from the roof of the mobile Koni workshop without any regrets. *"My position with ATS is simple,"* he said: *"I don't pay (team boss Gunter) Schmid, and he doesn't pay me. We have a confirmed entry, in my name, for the whole year with ATS... though I don't know what FISA has decided about it now. And I have been told that there will be a decision about Monaco before the end of this week."*

One little mystery remains to be cleared up, however. How was Borgudd able to take over the place reserved for Lammers on the list of drivers "registered" with FISA shortly before Long Beach? *"We were informed by the team that Lammers was unwell"*, said FISA Secretary General Yvon Léon in Paris: *"that is, of course, an acceptable reason for the substitution of a registered driver."*

Yet the Lammers who attended the Belgian GP was obviously in all the rude good health of a top athlete, planning for the future and determined not to allow a momentary set back to knock him out of Formula 1 racing. While FISA looks into the truth behind the Dutchman's "illness," and Herr Schmid continues to cultivate musical Swedes, Lammers will look for a position elsewhere. *"I came from absolutely zero to this level,"* he says, *"and nothing will stop me."*

DE ANGELIS: ARMCHAIR RACING

When Lotus pulled out of the San Marino Grand Prix, Elio de Angelis found himself with a weekend off and decided to stay at home and watch the race on television. It was almost welcome relaxation for the Italian who enjoyed the experience. *"I was quite tensed up and nervous before the start of the race. I felt that I shouldn't have been sitting in an armchair in front of the TV. But once the Grand Prix started, I wasn't at all disappointed I wasn't there. I was completely absorbed. It was as though I'd lowered my visor and obliterated all the problems of why I wasn't on the grid. I was as involved in the race as any other Italian fan. I cheered on Pironi when he led the race, I cheered on Patrese when he was battling with Piquet, and Villeneuve as he picked up places. When Gilles pitted for slicks, I knew that Piquet would win. I made a bet with my father, who thought that Pironi would stay in the lead. I won..."*

Despite de Angelis's absence, there were no less than six Italian drivers at Imola. It was unfortunate that four of them crashed. De Angelis has his own views as to why this happened: *"It wasn't just bad luck. They get carried away by their enthusiasm and the fact that they're racing in front of their home crowd. But I don't think that would have happened to Patrese and I. It's simply a question of experience."*

Other Formula 1 teams haven't been slow to react to Lotus's problems. Elio has already received a number of offers from various teams. *"Why hide the fact? It's a good feeling, particularly because they're good teams. But Colin Chapman first put his confidence in me and I can't let him down. I'm not going to quit just because he's in trouble. Anyway, I get on very well with everyone in the team. Obviously, I'd like to be driving for a winning team, but then I'm still young, time is on my side. I'm gaining experience and that will certainly be of use to me in later years. I'm sure of that.*

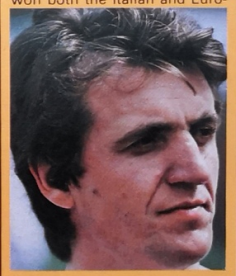
"When any driver signs for Chapman he takes a risk, because Colin is an innovator. His ideas may or may not work. That's the way he is and frankly that doesn't worry me in the slightest, if anything, the opposite."

In spite of his admiration for Chapman, any Italian driver worth his salt will always be conscious of Ferrari's record. *"There are many Formula 1 team that are happy just to finish in the points. But not Ferrari. Ferrari want to win, and nothing less will do. And they have the finance and technical resources to do so. Every driver wants to work for Ferrari, especially if he's Italian."*

GHINZANI: TWO YEARS LATE

At the beginning of the 1979 season, Piercarlo Ghinzani had only a drive in a Fiat Ritmo/Strada and little else. Two years later at Zolder, he not only qualified for his first Grand Prix, but finished it too.

There's no doubt that this 29 year old from Bergamo in Italy deserved to make his Formula 1 debut. After four years in lesser Formulas, Piercarlo moved into Formula 3 in 1976, and found that the only person he couldn't beat was Riccardo Patrese, who won both the Italian and Euro-



pean F3 titles. But the next year it was Piercarlo's turn to win the Euro F3 series, although Elio de Angelis beat him to the Italian title.

Ghinzani started the 1980 season with only another Fiat Ritmo/Strada drive. Fortunately Lancia came to the rescue. Like Jean-Pierre Jaussaud, France's forgotten Formula 3 star, Ghinzani found himself a career in long distance Group 5 races driving a Martini Lancia Beta Monte Carlo turbo with Eddie Cheever.

He was again chosen to drive for the Lancia team this year, but just before Zolder *"I got a phone call from Enzo Osella on Wednesday morning. Miguel-Angel Guerra couldn't drive the FI Osella because of his Imola injuries. His replacement, Giorgio Francia, didn't have the right licence, so I was asked to drive."* Ghinzani acquitted himself well, scraping onto the tail end of the grid, an achievement in itself, and despite losing his rear wing, he finished his first GP in 13th position.

PIRONI'S STAND

Friday's events at Zolder made it a very bleak day for motor racing. Things could only get better; Formula 1 had hopefully sunk as low as it could. Sunday's events proved that things weren't going to improve that quickly. Formula I was close to plumbing new depths.

Fortunately some good did emerge during that wearing afternoon. At the end of the first lap, Didier Pironi realised that there had been a bad accident on the startline and decided to slow the pace. Behind him, the majority of the field eased off as well. And as the Indian file of cars wound their way back to the grid behind the red Ferrari, everyone crowded around Pironi. As he got out of the car, those on the grid broke into spontaneous applause for this Frenchman. It was a unique and moving reaction.

Everyone had been horrified by the events of the previous minutes. By taking the initiative and stopping the race himself, Didier had brought a ray hope that was desperately needed at Zolder: a sensible, logical and humane attitude.

His action confirmed the good intentions of those who had demonstrated on the grid a few minutes earlier in the name of safety and sport. Accelerating past the marshals attending the injured mechanic and the wrecked Arrows at 120 mph would scarcely have reflected those principles. Didier showed his support in the best and most sensible way possible.

It was unfortunate for the drivers that their fully justified demonstration should indirectly result in catastrophe. But the way in which Bernie Ecclestone precipitated events prior to the start of the race was exactly what the demonstrators were against. The wanted their views to be heard, but they'd been ignored. They wanted to work in safer conditions, but the race started in conditions that were obviously unsafe.

Should the demonstrators be applauded for their stand? Opinion is divided in formula 1; read what Alan Jones has to say about it in his column. But for those who have observed Formula 1 for a number of years - and have been sickened by nearly everything that has happened over the past year - a plea to save the sport and improve safety is one that shouldn't go unheeded. At the very least, it's proof that some people know what's right.

Eric Bhat

The paddock in Zolder

CHAPMAN'S STRENGTH IN ADVERSITY

It was only five weeks before Zolder that Colin Chapman had flown away from Buenos Aires muttering darkly of a conspiracy to force him out of racing. He had already threatened to withdraw from racing altogether when two pieces of additional bad news arrived: first, the two week detention in Switzerland of his sponsor, Essex boss David Thieme; and then the decision of the FISA Appeal Court on April 23 that imposed what would appear to be a final ban on the innovative Lotus T88 before it had been given a chance to race.

Such setbacks have put lesser men than Chapman out for the count. The outlook certainly looked bad before the San Marino GP at Imola two weeks earlier, when the Essex-Lotus team, citing *force majeure*, withdrew from a world championship race for the first time in 11 years. But no sooner had practice begun at Imola than there were reports from England that a new Lotus F1 car was being tested in England. The team did its best to deny the existence of this mysterious device, but when it made a very public appearance a week later during tyre tests at Zolder the secret was out: Team Lotus was back in racing, reacting in the same spirit which has overcome countless previous disappointments.

The Colin Chapman who arrived at Zolder was certainly in a fighting mood, and his enthusiasm was infectious. He had come to Belgium not only to race but also to campaign, as certain journalists were to find out when they called on him in his motorhome. For Chapman, undeterred by the decisions of officials at Long Beach, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aire and in Paris, had prepared for release to the press no fewer than five sets of documents (amounting to 18 pages of text) which indicated his very clear intention of "representing" the T88 - still in twin chassis form - and racing it at last in 1981. The "B" version of the car has already been shown to several of the constructors who had opposed it at Long Beach and elsewhere, and one of them (McLaren director Teddy Mayer;) confessed that he regarded it as "entirely legal."

Meanwhile, the allegedly secret Lotus has been revealed as a converted T88 chassis fitted with fixed sidepods. Though he says there is "a fair chance" it will go to Monaco, Chapman declines to give it a type number. While some journalists have assumed that it is the Lotus T87, French wags have suggested that is should be called the "T44", since it is in effect the T88 with half the designed number of chassis...

Supporting his friend on race morning at Zolder was none other than David Thieme, attending his first race of the year and showing just as much determination to survive in business as the Lotus chief. The famous Essex double-decker hospitality vehicle may have been missing, but there was something reassuring about the return of the familiar Thieme profile, complete with giant cigar and unmistakeable "El Zorro" hat.

Nevertheless, finance remains a major problem for Team Lotus. There was only one spare Ford-Cosworth engine in the truck that brought the two rebuilt T81s to Zolder, and Chapman admits that he is actively looking for a major sponsor to step in alongside Tissot watches, the Swiss company which has stayed loyally at his side for three years.

It seemed only right that the Belgian Grand Prix should have justified Chapman's persistence. It was an inspired Nigel Mansell who finished in an almost unbelievable 3rd place, and backing him up was.

SCHECKTER

This doesn't mean that Scheckter is about to become a New Zealander, but that he's involved in the promotion of a new range of helmets from the Swiss company, Kiwi. It's part of jis new career, of which more in a future issue.

Kiwi is a relatively new company - four years old - based in the canton of Grison in Switzerland. However, progress has been rapid for the company is producing 1,400 units a day.

Scheckter will be involved in their promotion in USA and South Africa, as well as the development of new models.

EDITORIALE ARBE MILANO

Since the 31st edition of Grand Prix International (San Marino Grand Prix), the Italian version of the publication has passed into the hands of Arbe SRL, (10 rue Arbe in Milan). The director of the company is Pietro Rizzo who has spent a number of years specialising in motor sport and various publications related to the sport. The Italian editor of SPI is Alessandro della Mora assisted by Viviane Pastourel.

MISS RENAULT-SPORT IS CLOTHED

The day after the Belgian Grand Prix, the Renault team, including the freed Rene Arnoux, went to Paris to elect Miss Renault-Sport. At the same time, the company introduced a new range of clothing: Renault-Sport Prestige.

ARNOUX IN THE SLAMMER

Where was Rene Arnoux during the race? Not in the Renault pits, regretting not having qualfied, but languishing in a nearby Belgian goal.

The previous evening, an unhappy Arnoux had left the circuit without any prospects for the following day. Rain had meant that he hadn't qualified. A long queue of traffic waited at the exit gate, but Arnoux was in no mood to wait. He pulled past a number of cars, and slotted into a gap further up the line. The car behind flashed his lights. *"The fellow behind has recognised me,"* thought Rene. No sir. The flashing light was in anger, and the driver promptly jumped out of his car and jumped on Rene's Renault 5 bonnet. *"Get off"*, shouted Rene, but the guy didn't move. So Rene set off with the man still clinging to the windscreen wipers. At the exit to the circuit, Rene stopped. *"What do you want? I told you to get off."* No reaction.

If this was a joke, Rene was ready to go along with it, and was going to get his own back. He drove back to the hotel at about 40mph, the man still clinging to the windscreen wipers.

"At least it proves that our wipers are strong," said the ever practical Renault PR lady, Marie-Claude Beaumont, salvaging something positive from a rather embarrassing situation.

Once back at the hotel, a further two or three miles on, Rene got out, and his passenger disappeared without even thanking the Grand Prix driver for the lift. He phoned the police instead.

Seeing the police arrive at the hotel, Alain Prost advised his teammate *"to go and hide, they're looking for you."* Rene disappeared into the kitchens.

"Which of you is Rene Arnoux?" asked the man in the uniform. *"You?"* *"Oh no, I'm Jacques Laffite,"* replied Jacques in a silly voice. Jacques wasn't so happy a moment later when Prost said *"go on Rene, don't be stupid, they've got you."*

But within minutes Rene Arnoux was found and driven off to spend the night in a "free hotel" nearby. He was let out of goal on Sunday evening. It was just as well he didn't qualify, although it's possible that the police would have allowed him out of prison for the race, and then driven him back agan afterwards, as happened to Ronnie Peterson a few years age.

HOVER RACERS

All the Grand Prix drivers were invited to try a new hovercraft designed for racing use, after the final practice session in Belgium. One of Belgium's many lakes was to be the scene of the test rides.

Didier Pironi and Alain Prost were the only two drivers to turn up, their engineering curiosity getting the better if them as usual. The result of a race between the two was a draw: Prost went of the track (lake) while Pironi broke a skirt (of the hovercraft) when crossing from one lake to another.

The narrow Zolder pits have long been criticised and are due to be replaced. But on Friday, they were the scene of an almost inevitable accident.

THE DAY SAFETY CAME SECOND

Gilles Villeneuve and Didier Pironi were the leaders of the driver demonstration.

One mechanic was killed and another badly injured during the Belgian Grand Prix weekend. Dave Luckett was injured following a demonstration by both drivers and mechanics, yet ironically, this demonstration was one of the few positive moves of the weekend. It was held in the name of sport and safety, two points that have been virtually ignored since the inception of the Concord Agreement. FISA and FOCA may have been reunited by this agreement, but it has done nothing but arouse suspicion and disagreement. A stalemate existed, until a third party became involved: the drivers, who could finally restore the balance.

by Eric BHAT

As more and more mechanics converged on the front rows of the grid, the normally tense atmosphere before a race began to undergo a change. Instead of intense concentration, there were sins of nervousness, of people unsure of themselves.

The cars had covered a slow lap from the pits to the grid. They were waiting for the five minute signal which normally precedes the start procedure. There would be a warming up lap, then the cars would form up on the grid, the red light would come on and then the green would send them on their way.

Carlos Reutemann, on pole position, and Nelson Piquet, slightly further back, were staring at the first corner. Their thoughts were on the race ahead. But on the second row, thoughts were racing under the full-face helmets. Riccardo Patrese and Didier Pironi were thinking of something else. They hesitated, and waited.

One the third row Gilles Villeneuve realised that the time had come. He calmly unbuckled his harness and lifted himself out of the cockpit. Then he walked determinedly towards the front of the grid, taking off his helmet as he went. It looked perfectly normal as though every driver did the same just before the start. On his way, he motioned to Pironi to join him.

Gilles reached the front row and turned round, defiantly facing the world of Formula 1. He face was set in grim determination. When Pironi joined him, they exchanged nervous smiles. Then the faces reflected their determination again. One could see that Gilles was saying, *"here I*

am and here I'm staying".

The threatened demonstration was under way, the drivers and mechanics were having their say. Of course they weren't carrying placards or shouting slogans. It was a much more peaceful demonstration than the type one might see at Hyde Park Corner or outside the White House.

Jacques Laffite was next to arrive, his face also set in grim determination. He made a comment to a furious Bernie Ecclestone as he passed him, the FOCA boss unable to believe his eyes. Riccardo Patrese strolled up, the first driver from an English team to dare to take part. *"Good to see you Riccardo,"* smiled Laffite and shook his hand. *"Ah, Mario, you're here too. Great."* Laffite tried to count the drivers supporting the demonstration. Jabouille was there, he could see Giacomelli as well, and Surer had decided to join them. But Jacques' task wasn't that easy. The mechanics had also sworn to demonstrate and joined the drivers. Amazed journalists tried to conduct a driver head count and ask the demonstrators for their reasons. The grid was packed. There was no way the race could start.

Gilles, Didier, Jacques and the others didn't have any placards as mentioned, but they didn't need them. They were much better off, and they knew it. The world was watching on television. The news that they were on strike was being shown live in countries throughout the world.

But to understand the whole story, one has to go back two days. It was a black Friday, a day when everything seemed to go wrong.

There was the Theodore Affair. Theodore Racing's red and white car was not allowed to take part in the first official practice session. Why? Because the team entered the 31st car for the World Championship. There's nothing you can do if you're number 31, because the sacrosanct Concord Agreement - an ironic name - says that only 30 cars are allowed to practise for a Grand Prix, and there's no arrangement for pre-qualifying to take any more. These 30 cars have been entered by FISA and FOCA: 12 from the former, 18 from the latter.

So the 31st car wasn't allowed to practise. The Theodore has practised for all the other Grands Prix so far this year because of the absence of the Lotus and Toleman teams at various races. It's qualified for every Grand Prix so far this year. Patrick Tambay even scored a World Championship point on the car's very first outing at Long Beach. But that, it seems, doesn't alter the fact that it was the 31st car to be entered in the championship, and there's no provision to take 31 cars in this sporting series.

There were also the Jones and Pironi Affairs, both of which were fairly similar. Jones set the fastest time in the first session, but when he brought his car back to the pits, the scrutineers checking his car's ride height found that it was a few millimeters too low. The regulations in this case are hypocritical. The cars are allowed to touch the ground and disregard this six centimeter rule when they're out on the track, setting a time; yet when they're in the pits, stationary,

The mechanics joined the drivers in their demonstration in order to protest their working conditions at Zolder. At three o clock on Sunday afternoon, when the race should have started, the grid was a mass of people.

Ecclestone, Chapman and Williams conferred and decided to hurry things up by sending their cars out on to the track. Here Williams clears the track in front of Jones.

The Italian drivers joined the demonstration. Riccardo Patrese joined in with his team's chief mechanic. Riccardo's action was risky as he drives for a FOCA team. Opposite, Bruno Giacomelli and Beppe Gabbiani state their case.

and the car is found to be too low, the previous fastest time is disallowed.

Pironi's trouble was that his Ferrari wouldn't sink low enough on the track to use its ground effect. So at the end of the session, the Ferrari mechanics lowered the car themselves and when Didier went back out onto the track, he set third fastest time. But then "bad luck" struck. His gearbox broke and he couldn't get the car back to the pits - and the ground clearance check. In both cases, the stupidity of the regulations were amply demonstrated. But quite frankly, that's nothing new. These columns have been filled with similar stories since the start of the season.

And then there was the Brabham Affair. According to this British team, a number of teams were using illegal driver-operated hydro-pneumatic suspension systems, so one of the Brabhams was fitted with an obviously driver-operated system. It was clearly illegal because the car has to be measured when it's in its lowest position. The Brabham people hoped that this system would be found to be illegal, which would outlaw their rivals' systems. But no, much to Alastair Caldwell's disappointment, the scrutineers took no notice. Apparently they said that *"you make the regulations anyway..."* Now there's a sensible and logical tale.

But there was worse to come. It was no longer ridiculous, but downright tragic. There was a fatal accident. Giovanni Amadeo, a 21 year old Osella mechanic, was fatally injured when he carelessly took a step backwards off the foot wide pit wall into the gap between the front wing and front wheel of Carlos Reutemann's Williams. There was nothing Reutemann could do. The incident shocked the Formula 1 world, and emphasised something that everyone already knew: the Zolder pits were too narrow. New pits are planned, but for Amadeo, they will be too late.

That was when the drivers realised that they would have to take action themselves. What followed can only be linked to the accident at the start.

The safety committee of the Grand Prix Drivers Association met at around 3.30 that Friday afternoon in the Ligier team's motorhome. The members talked about the various events that day, but principally Tambay's exclusion and the accident in the pits. These were two points that conflicted. On the one hand was the unsporting and illogical exclusion of the Theodore, and on the other hand, there were too many cars trying to qualify, and the pits were too crowded. There was only one solution to both problems: organise a pre-qualifying session the next morning.

The GPDA's demand was officially made in the following communique: *"The GPDA strongly request that tomorrow morning, prior to official practice, standard regulation procedure for pre-qualification should take place in order to select a maximum of 26 cars for practice and qualifying for this Grand Prix and the remaining Grands Prix."* Signatory to this request were Villeneuve, Laffite, Jabouille, Andretti, Tambay, Pironi, Cheever and Giacomelli.

The GPDA demand was taken very lightly by the organisers. In fact it isn't known if there was ever an official reply to it. A number of team managers simply smiled as they read it. We're told that Peter Warr of Fittipaldi looked over the demand briefly before tearing it up, laughing as he did so.

He was wrong to laugh. The drivers who form the safety committee had drawn up contingency plans in case their request was refused. They'd already discussed the possibility of a strike ten minutes before the start of the Grand Prix. But they'd have to talk to all the drivers in order to convince them that what they were doing was in the name of the sport and safety. A full meeting of the GPDA was to take place the next day.

At nine o clock the next morning, the track was deserted. None of the engines were running: no pre-qualifying. *"I can't hear anything,"* said Laffite as he arrived. *"I knew it. Right, now we'll see what's going to happen."*

The GPDA met again that day but this time there were 15 of them under the presidency of Jody Scheckter who'd just arrived in Belgium. The safety committee drivers had been joined by Watson, de Cesaris, Alboreto, de Angelis, Mansell, Prost and Serra. But they were no longer unanimous. There were doubts: a ten minute strike? Why just before the start? At least they all agreed that they were fed up with the current situation. Everyone agreed that there were too many cars on the track. But as to how they could make their feelings known was another matter.

The members of the safety committee strengthened their argument: *"it's got to come to an end. FISA and FOCA have got to start listening to us. They're destroying Formula 1. They're not taking our situation into consideration. We must prove to them that there's more to it than just risking our necks. We must fight for improved safety. Certainly, 26 cars on the track is an improvement, yet they refuse to allow it. We've got to show them that we don't agree with what they're doing. Let's delay the start by five minutes. That's not too bad."*

"But why just before the start?" asked one of the doubters. *"That's when we're the most tensed up. We've got to concentrate."*

"Because that's when we'll get maximum exposure. All the TV companies will be taking the race, and everyone will realise that we're serious. And remember that FOCA does very nicely out of the TV rights. The FOCA members aren't going to be at all happy when we sabotage the transmission of the race."

"But if I get out of the car just before the start, Colin will sack me. I'd certainly be without a drive in a couple of weeks."

"Same with me," said another. *"Ken will cut off my... if I as much as poke my little finger out of the car."*

"But listen," replied Laffite. *"They can't sack you except in a case of force majeure. You're quite safe until the end of the season, because the cars are entered in your names."*

"So what about Lammers, where's the force majeure in that situation?"

Ah, that was a sore point. Lammers had been replaced by Borgudd in ATS number nine, and no one had taken any no-

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tice. There was yet another Affair. But those who were going to strike were going ahead with it, whether they were accompanied by the others or not. They were going to make their protest.

On Sunday, around eleven in the morning, Jean-Marie Balestre began a little tour around the motorhomes to test the temperature of the various teams. Information had leaked out about what was going to happen, in spite of promises to maintain silence so that there would still be an element of surprise. When he visited the Williams motorhome, where he's scarcely considered a saint, he received a slight setback and reprimand from Frank. *"The drivers don't know what they want. For instance, they wanted skirts banned, they certainly asked for them to banned enough times. But look what's happening now we don't have skirts. Is the situation any better?* So the drivers weren't credible, they lacked conviction, they were not serious. The strike? It wouldn't happen.

But the drivers did believe in it, very strongly. Villeneuve and Laffite were utterly committed. Slightly less so was Prost, who said, three quarters of an hour before the race, *"if the others go up to the front of the grid, I'll go. No, I'll go anyway, as long as I'm not the only one."* But then there were some who didn't support the idea at all: *"if everyone goes, I'll go too."*

At the same time, the mechanics had been particularly upset by the accident to the Osella mechanic. They were also planning a similar protest which was more official and was considerably more publicised. Everyone knew that they were going to demonstrate. But few people were really upset about it. Their action was perfectly understandable considering the fatality to one of their colleagues. Their demonstration would probably be more symbolic and wouldn't last too long, perhaps a minute's silence.

Then the moment arrived, and it wasn't the start of the race. Drivers and mechanics united, which only served to strengthen the demonstration, almost beyond the hopes of the protesters themselves.

The time is five to three on Sunday afternoon. Gilles and Didier have just arrived on their "dummy" grid, more a protest platform. And Jacques Laffite, who has further to walk, joins his fellow objecters. Seeing Bernie Ecclestone standing by Piquet's Brabham, Jacques takes the bit between his teeth and walks straight over to him. Jacques looks like a man going into battle, which (to an extent) he is. Bernie holds in his hand a letter from the GDPA which is addressed to him and Jean-Marie Balestre. Its most important points are the following: *"we have found it necessary to take this action... because since the Concord Agreement the drivers have been totally disregarded in any decisions that have been made. For the last three years we have been trying to limit, for safety reasons, the number of cars to 26 in practice, and now we find a driver with championship points being refused the chance to qualify. This and other points were not considered when the Concord Agreement was drawn up..."*

Trevor Rowe, the secretary of the GPDA, had distributed photocopies of the letter to the various demonstrting drivers. It was strange to see them in their helmets and overalls distributing leaflets like workers outside a factory, especially when there was a Grand Prix to run in a few minutes.

Bernie immediately took hold of the conversation with Jacques Laffite. *"What's this letter? I've never seen it before. Why have you only given it to me now when we're about to start?"* Bernie had obviously forgotten Friday's communique from the safety committee - maybe he'd never even seen it - which was basically saying exactly the same thing. Bernie's innocent attitude touched off a spark within Laffite, who promptly exploded and told the president of FOCA just what he thought of him: *"Ok, that's enough. We wanted pre-qualifying and we never even got a reply to our demand. Right, so now we're on strike. When you asked your people to strike at Imola, they did so. Now we're showing that we can do exactly the same. We drivers have just as much right to put our case forward."* And he walked away. Bernie, livid, turned round to Colin Chapman, *"Damn the skirts. The cars were at least safe and the situation was perfectly clear. Now see what we've got on our hands?"*

Everyone was grumbling. The mechanics were demonstrating about their working conditions. One of the Arrows mechanics told our photographer Bernard Asset: *"this circuit is dreadful, and I'm not just talking about the narrow pitlane which is so bloody dangerous during practice. There are other things about the place which are just as bad. You have to pay to go to the loo, and they're closed at night anyway. The pits are like rabbit hutches. You spend the whole time dragging pit trollies from the pits to the truck and back again. And the insurance cover for us isn't good."*

Each of the drivers held their own little press conference explaining why they'd taken their action. The Ferrari, Talbot and Alfa Romeo drivers were all there, but also some of the FOCA drivers who had braved the wrath of their team managers and whose stand was particulrly brave: Patrese, Stohr, Rosberg, Surer and Cheever.

"I hope you're going to criticise all those who didn't protest," said Jacques Laffite to some journalists, *"they've no guts."* The others? Nelson Piquet, employed by Bernie Ecclestone of Brabham, could scarcely do anything but stay in his car. Carlos Reutemann thought it wasn't the right time to air grievances: *"there's too much tension just before the start to hold this kind of demonstration. Anyway, it wouldn't have any effect unless there were all the drivers. If there had been 23 drivers there, I would have made it 24."* Jones also remained in his car, tapping his gloves on the front of the cockpit. *"Formula 1 is in enough of a mess as it is without this sort of thing. Anyway, it wasn't the right time to add to the chaos."*

But then things began to speed up. Not knowing how long the demonstration was going to last, Bernie Ecclestone, Frank Williams and Colin Chapman had a quick conference. They went back to their respective drivers and told them to start their engines, in the hope it might catch the others unawares. *"Start the engine,"* ordered Bernie. Alastair Caldwell glanced at everyone still crowding the front of the grid. He was worried that the engine might overheat if the car was stationary for too long. *"No, I think we should wait a minute."* Bernie was annoyed: *"I said start the engine."* Then he cleared away the people in front of Piquet and the Brabham slowly pulled away from the grid, followed by Reutemann, Jones and then the rest. The protest was over. We were going to have a motor race.

But no, the Belgian Grand Prix was only heading towards its final drama. Derek Ongaro, anxious to get the race started, switched the light to green. Another warm-up lap? Patrese was stalled on the grid. His mechanic jumped over the wall to get him started. There were other mechanics on the grid who just managed to escape, but Dave Luckett was crouched behind Patrese's car. Further back on the grid, Stohr dropped the clutch when the light turned green.

Split seconds later, he saw in front of him Patrese's stalled car, and Luckett behind it. There was nothing he could but crash into the back of his teammate's Arrows, sandwiching the unfortunate mechanic.

Luckett was fortunate to escape with two broken legs. But it was a horrifying fact that the green light had been given while there were still mechanics on the grid. Stohr, who feared that he'd killed a mechanic from his own team, was distraught: *"it's criminal the organisers are completely mad."* His opinion was shared by many.

Yellow and black flags were waved at various points around the track, but there was no red flag at the start/finish line. Piquet and Reutemann continued at racing speed, until they found the track blocked by the rest of the field, parked on the grid. They'd been stopped by Didier Pironi who realised that there had been a bad accident after completing the first lap. He then weaved all over the track on his second lap, slowing the others down. When Laffite got back to his pit, he was prepared to give up there and then. It took all Guy Ligier's persuasive powers to get him back into the cockpit.

Without even considering the accident, it must be said that the way the organisers reacted and those who persuaded them in their actions were wholly to blame. Whether the race is being televised live or not, even if the race is delayed, it must never be started without care and consideration. The drivers made their protest for safety reasons. That protest was cut short, and the word safety was made to look stupid. Distressing as it was, Dave Luckett's accident proved that the drivers were one hundred per cent right. □

Didier Pironi stopped the race after the startline accident by weaving in front of the rest of the field. He was applauded for his action.

Jacques Laffite pulled straight into the pits after the accident. He was so depressed that only Guy Ligier's persuasion resulted in him driving again.

An awful twist of fate for the Arrows team, that one car should run into the back of the other, badly injuring one of the mechanics.

EXTRA, EXTRA

LAFFITE RAISES TALBOT MORALE

The figure dashing up the pit lane on Friday morning was unmistakeably that of Jacques Laffite. Jacques-be-nimble, Jacques-be-quick, he barely glanced at Nelson Piquet's Brabham as he weaved his way through the throng to the Williams pit, ducking underneath the wing of Reutemann's car to take a look at its rear suspension. Brushing aside the questions being fired at him, he straightened up and turned to have a word with his old team boss Frank Williams. Lifting the headset away from Frank's ears, he whispered a joke and laughed, loudly. *"At the moment we're having a bit of trouble with the car,"* he announced, *"but things are getting better, I'm sure of it."*

There was no doubt that the Matra V12 in the back of Laffite's Talbot was producing more than just a lot of decibels that afternoon. By the time the unofficial practice was over, Jacques had done a 1m 21.62 s lap: only Jones and Reutemann had been quicker. Talbot team manager Gérard Ducarouge and team owner Guy Ligier were relieved, for now they knew that they had a competitive car again. They had suspected as much during private tests at Zolder a week earlier, but without any other top teams against which to compare their times they had been obliged to wait until now for confirmation. Talbot was back in the hunt.

That afternoon, however, as things were getting serious, there was to be a minor setback, for a broken differential hampered Jabouille from making any progress during the official session with his JS17, just as he looked like being up there with Laffite.

Indeed, before the session was over there was more disappointment. Jacques was walking dolefully back to the pits: *"bloody engine's gone,"* said Guy Ligier, who for once didn't have a table to thump with his fist. *"That's ruined it for today,"* he groaned: *"and to think that he had a chance of pole position!"* Ligier himself knew that the T-car wasn't set up properly for the Zolder circuit, and anyway the track was now getting slippery. Jacques had missed the boat, though he managed to snatch 9th fastest time with some forceful driving.

The Saturday morning untimed session again confirmed that the Talbots were going well enough to be among the leaders. The Piquet-Reutemann-Jones trio had been unofficially timed that morning in the 1m 20s bracket, and Jacques was one of three others who had been timed around 1m 21s.

But there was to be no second opportunity. The shower of rain which fell just before the final timed session ensured that yesterday's times on a dry track would stand, with Laffite on the fifth row and Jabouille on the eighth. It looked at last as though they would be able to do more than just defend their placings. For Laffite in particular there was a chance of getting up front, perhaps even leading... with a bit of luck.

But luck continues to elude the ever-unfortunate Jabouille. He was forced to stop no fewer than four times during the race, plagued by some problem with the handling. The fifth stop was the last, this time with a broken transmission. Yet Lady Luck was to smile on Laffite. For the first time in this Zolder weekend, he was in a position to exploit the new potential of the blue car.

"It's got good grip and feels really nice," he had said after the previous week's unofficial test *"...and that's the first time I've been able to say that."* The two-stage suspension was working well, and so was Jacques. In the race, when he found himself lying 2nd behind Reutemann, for a while it even looked as if he might be a winner. *"I was pushing very hard, so much that the front tyres began to grain. As a result, the thing was oversteering so much that I had to back off"*, said Jacques: *"that made it very difficult for me in the tight corner. I had to be very careful."* Nevertheless, he was able to maintain a 15 second gap over the Lotus driver, Nigel Mansell. Yet it was not the sort of day to bring a smile to the face of Jacques Laffite. The memories were still too strong of the events which preceded a race last year: he will never forget what happened only one week before he won the 1980 German Grand Prix.

R de la S

MANSELL: SUNDAY NIGHT FEVER!

Exactly one year ago, Nigel Mansell was far from a busy man. A new contract with Lotus guaranteed him a certain number of Formula 1 test drives, and he was helping to sort out the troublesome Ralt-Honda F2 car for Ron Tauranac. But a year can change a great deal, especially in racing, and the day after this year's Belgian GP was the proof of a major turn-round in the life of this trim, moustachioed 26 year old from the Birmingham suburb of Hall Green.

For a start, outside the Mansell home in Doveridge Road, there was a camera crew from ATV, complete with their microphones, cables and lights. And then, guarded by his blonde wife Roseanne, there was the persistent telephone. In the middle of the hubbub was the undoubted hero of the Belgian GP, this ex-Girling engineer who had brought a supposedly outdated Lotus 81 past two healthy Ferrari turbocars into 3rd place, and he was nursing a bad cold!

"I think I shall have to see the doctor this afternoon... if I can find time," he said in an accent that betrayed his Midland origins as well as the 'flu. *"I seem to have picked up something in Belgium on Friday: I dosed myself up with aspirin for the race, but I still wasn't feeling too good."*

Essex Team Lotus had arrived in Belgium without any great hopes for the Zolder race. The conventional version of the banned Lotus 88, the so-called Lotus "87", was not yet ready to race, and Lotus drivers de Angelis and Mansell would have to rely on hastily rebuilt versions of the old Lotus 81s. There had only been enough time to make a hydropneumatic suspension system for one car (it was given to de Angelis), and rumour suggested that the team's straitened finances prevented them from bringing more than one fresh engine.

"Right from the first day of practice, I decided to concentrate on getting the car set up for the race instead of trying to get a really quick practice lap. On Saturday, after I had done a low 1m 22s time, I decided to sit out 40 minutes of one practice session. My engine felt good, and I wanted it for the race."

In the confused first start of this tragic Belgian GP, Mansell was lucky not to collide with another competitor as he accelerated away from his position on the fifth row of the grid. In the second start, he made a great getaway. On the first lap, he even managed to squeeze past Laffite and Rosberg, though he wisely let them through again almost immediately to finish the first lap in 9th position.

The move that took him past Rosberg in the first left hander he describes as *"very clean and very satisfying."* Then he switched his attention to Gilles Villeneuve's Ferrari. *"I decided to try to attract his attention, because I could see that he had an oversteer problem. In fact I got very close in the fast right hander before the long straight and he ran wide."*

With one Ferrari sorted out, he turned his attention to the other: *"I found that I could go deeper into the corners than Pironi, probably because he was in trouble with his brakes. At the right hander before the Canal I was able to go by him when he ran wide onto the dirt and had to lift off.*

"I must admit that we took a little bit of a risk with my car, because Nigel Stroud and I decided to put a bit more front wing on the car before the race. We thought that we might need the extra downforce if I was running in someone else's slipstream, and it worked out perfectly. But I had to work very hard all through the race on the adjustable roll bars and the brake balance. As we had anticipated, I also lost a lot of downforce when the fuel ran out. I think the car must have been at least eight or nine centimetres from the ground when I crossed the line..."

Mansell's precise but forceful driving makes it easy to overlook the fact that his GP tally still doesn't stretch to double figures. Two months ago he covered himself in glory by rescuing his team manager from the waves on a Brazilian beach. At Zolder he restored Lotus fortunes under the approving eye of Essex boss David Thieme. There's obviously a big future for Nigel Mansell... and it isn't all due to aspirin!

M.G.D.

THE FILM OF THE RACE

Nelson Piquet was first off the grid when the lights turned to green for the first time, but after all the confusion and chaos, it was Didier Pironi who took command when the lights turned green for the second time. Four drivers quickly pulled away from the rest: Pironi, Reutemann, Piquet and Jones. Of that quartet, only Reutemann managed to finish without problems. Piquet and Jones both went off the road and Pironi dropped back with brake trouble. Laffite caught up the four in front and finished a fine second.

1 - *The first start: Piquet heads Reutemann. Pironi tries to take the Williams round the outside, because of Patrese not starting.*

2 - *But it's different the second time the light turns green: Reutemann makes a better start than Piquet this time, but both of them are led into the first corner by Pironi.*

3 - *Four drivers quickly pull away from the rest: Pironi, Reutemann, Piquet and Jones.*

4 - *Further back, Villeneuve, Rosberg and Mansell fight over seventh place. The Lotus driver, ninth here, finishes an excellent third.*

5 - *Nelson Piquet goes off the road at the hairpin after banging wheels with Jones on the eleventh lap. The Australian is now second.*

6 - *Jones also crashes when his car jumps out of third gear. Reutemann now leads Laffite, and they finish in that order.*

7 - *Behind the first three: Reutemann, Laffite and Mansell, come Villeneuve and de Angelis, but Pironi, sixth here, drops to eighth by the end.*

PRACTICE

The first practice session was the one that counted, because rain the next afternoon prevented any of the drivers from improving their times. This was particularly unfortunate for Jones, Arnoux, Tambay and Daly.

Alan Jones, in fact, set a time of 1'22"20, that's eight hundredths faster than his teammate's pole-winning time, but it was discounted when his Williams's ground clearance was found to be insufficient when checked at the entrance to the pit lane.

René Arnoux had even less luck. He hadn't even qualified on Friday evening so the wet track put paid to his chances of a race altogether. On Friday afternoon, Rene's new RE30 suffered an engine breakage after three laps. He climbed into his old RE20 only to spin and stall before he'd set a time good enough to get onto the grid. Daly scraped onto the grid, but had all his times disallowed for the same reason as Jones.

Tambay's situation was rather different. Despite practising in the Friday morning session, he was banned from taking part in the afternoon because he was the 31st car when only 30 were allowed on the track. When Toleman withdrew one of their cars, he was able to take part, but by then the rain was falling and he had as much chance as any of the others.

Because Jones's time was disallowed, Reutemann inherited pole position in front of Piquet. Most of the drivers set their fastest time during the first 20 minutes of Friday's official session, because then the track began to break up and became slippery.

RACE

There wasn't one race but two: one short, the other long. Neither was particularly exciting. After the drivers and mechanics had demonstrated to air their grievances, there was considerable confusion because mechanics were still on the grid. Dave Luckett of Arrows was hit by Stohr's car while trying to start teammate Patrese's similar car.

Nelson Piquet led the first lap in front of Pironi and Reutemann. As they passed the pits, some of the drivers realised that there had been a bad accident. Piquet and Reutemann, who slowed a little, continued, but Pironi slowed those behind him and virtually stopped the race on his own.

Twenty-five minutes later, the race was started again, although after the chaos of the first start and its unfortunate circumstances, few people were very enthusiastic. This time it was Pironi who shot into the lead in front of Reutemann, Piquet, Watson, Villeneuve, Laffite, Rosberg and Mansell. Alain Prost's clutch wasn't strong enough to take two starts and he soon retired in the pits.

Four cars pulled away at the front of pack: Pironi leading Reutemann, Piquet, and Jones who had overtaken Watson. Pironi would pull out a few lengths lead each time the cars accelerated, only to lose it again in the corners. Piquet and Jones both overtook Reutemann when he missed a gear on the tenth lap. A lap later, Piquet went off at the hairpin when he and Jones banged wheels when Jones tried to take second place.

On the 13th lap, the two Williams overtook Pironi when the Ferrari driver found his brakes had virtually disappeared and ran wide out of a corner. He soon dropped to fourth place behind Laffite, and continued to drop further and further down the field.

Then came a surprise on the 20th lap when leader Jones suddenly went off the road into a barrier when the car jumped out of third gear. Reutemann found himself in the lead with a considerable margin to Laffite in second and Nigel Mansell in third place. The Lotus driver had driven superbly from the start of the race, overtaking Rosberg, Villeneuve, Watson and Pironi, one after the other, and picking up more places when Piquet and Jones disappeared. While Reutemann had considerable lead, everyone waited for Mansell to start catching Laffite, but the gap remained constant and the positions unchanged.

On the 54th of the 70 lap race, rain began to fall. The organisers decided to stop the race on the 55th, but the results were taken from the preceding lap, according to the regulations. This was fortunate for Cheever who was sixth on the 54th lap, but whose engine blew on the 55th. Reutemann was acclaimed the winner from Laffite and Mansell.

Zolder statistics

BELGIAN GRAND PRIX

Date : May 17, 1981
Circuit length : 2.648 miles
Race distance : 54 laps, 143.007 miles, shortened from 70 laps
Conditions : cloudy
Attendance : 50,000 spectators

THE RECORD

(last five races)

1976 : Lauda (Ferrari)
1977 : Nilsson (Lotus-Ford)
1978 : Andretti (Lotus-Ford)
1979 : Scheckter (Ferrari)
1980 : Pironi (Ligier)

STARTING GRID

REUTEMANN Williams FW 07/B 1'22"28	**PIQUET** Brabham BT 49 1'23"13
PIRONI Ferrari 126 C 1'23"47	**PATRESE** Arrows A3 1'23"67
WATSON Marlboro MP 4/1 1'23"73	**JONES** Williams FW 07/8 1'23"82
VILLENEUVE Ferrari 126 C 1'23"94	**CHEEVER** Tyrrell 010 1'24"36
LAFFITE Talbot Ligier JS 17 1'24"41	**MANSELL** Lotus 81 1'24"44
ROSBERG Fittipaldi F8 1'24"45	**PROST** Renault RE 30 1'24"63
STOHR Arrows A3 1'24"66	**DE ANGELIS** Lotus 81 1'24"96
SURER Ensign N 181 1'25"19	**JABOUILLE** Talbot Ligier JS17 1'25"28
GIACOMELLI Alfa Romeo 179 1'25"31	**ANDRETTI** Alfa Romeo 179 1'25"56
ALBORETO Tyrrell 010 1'25"91	**SERRA** Fittipaldi F8 1'25"93
REBAQUE Brabham BT 49/C 1'26"52	**GABBIANI** Osella FA1 1'26"69
DE CESARIS Mc Laren M 29C 1'26"95	**GHINZANI** Osella FA1 1'27"48

Non-qualified :

ARNOUX (Renault RE 30) 1'27"93
SALAZAR (March 811) 1'28"38
BORGUDD (ATS HGS1) 1'29"98
TAMBAY (Theodore TY 01) 1'32"47
WARWICK (Toleman TG 181) 1'35"97
HENTON (Toleman TG 181) 1'36"37

TIMES IN UNOFFICIAL PRACTICE

FRIDAY MORNING		SATURDAY MORNING		SUNDAY MORNING	
Jones	1'21"07	Piquet	1'20"55	Reutemann	1'22"77
Reutemann	1'21"33	Reutemann	1'20"81	Jones	1'23"13
Laffite	1'21"62	Jones	1'20"89	Laffite	1'23"95
Piquet	1'21"95	Patrese	1'21"28	Piquet	1'23"99
Villeneuve	1'22"88	Prost	1'21"49	De Angelis	1'24"16
Pironi	1'22"92	Laffite	1'21"53	Villeneuve	1'24"17
Prost	1'22"96	De Angelis	1'22"32	Patrese	1'24"26
Cheever	1'23"36	Rebaque	1'22"36	Prost	1'24"45
Mansell	1'23"36	Giacomelli	1'22"43	Mansell	1'24"71
Patrese	1'23"50	Villeneuve	1'22"43	Cheever	1'24"96
Rebaque	1'23"58	Mansell	1'22"52	Watson	1'25"24
Watson	1'23"65	Arnoux	1'22"55	Pironi	1'25"25
Andretti	1'23"71	Pironi	1'22"57	Rebaque	1'25"34
Giacomelli	1'23"72	Stohr	1'22"66	De Cesaris	1'25"80
De Angelis	1'23"76	Watson	1'22"67	Giacomelli	1'25"94
Rosberg	1'23"77	Jabouille	1'22"68	Surer	1'26"26
Arnoux	1'24"21	Cheever	1'22"70	Gabbiani	1'26"26
Stohr	1'24"24	Andretti	1'22"74	Stohr	1'26"61
Serra	1'24"43	Rosberg	1'23"51	Alboreto	1'26"90
Surer	1'24"46	De Cesaris	1'23"80	Andretti	1'26"93
Tambay	1'24"50	Surer	1'23"81	Ghinzani	1'27"58
Alboreto	1'25"24	Gabbiani	1'23"95	Jabouille	1'28"41
Borgudd	1'25"59	Alboreto	1'24"00	Serra	1'28"85
Jabouille	1'25"70	Daly	1'24"00	Rosberg	1'41"81
Gabbiani	1'25"99	Serra	1'25"05		
Daly	1'26"54	Salazar	1'25"67		
Salazar	1'27"01	Ghinzani	1'25"76		
Ghinzani	1'27"88	Borgudd	1'26"42		
Warwick	1'29"81	Warwick	1'34"55		
De Cesaris	1'30"11				

PROVISIONAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS

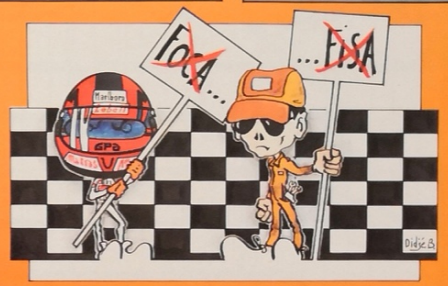
Position/Driver	United States West	Brazil	Argentina	San Marino	Belgium	TOTAL
1. Reutemann	6	9	6	4	9	34
2. Piquet	4	—	9	9	—	22
3. Jones	9	6	3	—	—	18
4. Patrese	—	4	—	6	—	10
5. Laffite	—	1	—	—	6	7
6. De Angelis	—	2	1	—	2	5
7. Prost	—	—	4	—	—	4
Mansell	—	—	—	—	4	4
9. Rebaque	—	—	—	3	—	3
Surer	—	3	—	—	—	3
Andretti	3	—	—	—	—	3
Villeneuve	—	—	—	—	3	3
Cheever	2	—	—	—	1	3
14. Arnoux	—	—	2	—	—	2
Pironi	—	—	—	2	—	2
16. De Cesaris	—	—	—	1	—	1
Tambay	1	—	—	—	—	1

THEIR FASTEST RACE LAPS

	Time	Lap n°
Reutemann	1'23"30	37
Laffite	1'23"65	34
Mansell	1'24"43	46
Villeneuve	1'24"65	40
De Angelis	1'24"50	35
Cheever	1'24"21	34
Watson	1'24"36	46
Pironi	1'24"82	7
Giacomelli	1'24"73	37
Andretti	1'25"82	29
Surer	1'25"23	30
Alboreto	1'26"71	17
Ghinzani	1'26"58	17

CONSTRUCTORS CUP

1. **Williams** 52 pts
2. **Brabham** 25 pts
3. **Arrows** 10 pts
4. **Lotus** 9 pts
5. **Talbot-Ligier** 7 pts
6. **Renault** 6 pts
7. **Ferrari** 5 pts
8. **Alfa-Romeo** 3 pts
   Ensign 3 pts
   Tyrrell 3 pts
11. **Theodore** 1 pt
    Mc Laren 1 pt



OFFICIAL PRACTICE TIMES

	1st session	2cnd session
Reutemann	**1'22"28**	1'36"27
Piquet	**1'23"13**	
Pironi	**1'23"47**	1'36"76
Patrese	**1'23"67**	1'38"28
Watson	**1'23"73**	1'30"92
Jones	**1'23"82**	1'27"43
Villeneuve	**1'23"94**	1'27"33
Cheever	**1'24"38**	1'31"00
Laffite	**1'24"41**	1'44"07
Mansell	**1'24"44**	
Rosberg	**1'24"46**	
Prost	**1'24"63**	1'43"35
Stohr	**1'24"66**	
De Angelis	**1'24"96**	
Surer	**1'25"19**	
Jabouille	**1'25"28**	1'38"87
Giacomelli	**1'25"31**	1'37"77
Andretti	**1'25"56**	1'32"17
Alboreto	**1'25"91**	1'32"21
Serra	**1'25"93**	
Rebaque	**1'26"52**	2'49"14
Gabbiani	**1'26"69**	
De Cesaris	**1'26"95**	1'30"99
Ghinzani	**1'27"48**	

RESULTS

1. REUTEMANN	Williams FW07/B	54 laps in 1h16'31"61 112.123 mph
2. LAFFITE	Talbot Ligier JS17	36"06 behind
3. MANSELL	Lotus 81	43"69 behind
4. VILLENEUVE	Ferrari 126 C	47"64 behind
5. DE ANGELIS	Lotus 81	49"20 behind
6. CHEEVER	Tyrrell 010	52"51 behind
7. WATSON	Mc Laren MP4	1'01"66 behind
8. PIRONI	Ferrari 126 C	1'32"04 behind
9. GIACOMELLI	Alfa Romeo 179	1'35"58 behind
10. ANDRETTI	Alfa Romeo 179	one lap behind
11. SURER	Ensign N 181	two laps behind
12. ALBORETO	Tyrrell 010	three laps behind
13. GHINZANI	Osella FA1	four laps behind

Fastest lap : Reutemann, 1'23"30, 114.451 mph

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Lap by lap - Giro per giro - Runde um Runde - Tour par tour - Vuelta a vuelta - Ronde n

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54

2 CARLOS REUTEMANN (RA)	Williams FW 07/B	
5 NELSON PIQUET (BR)	Brabham BT 49	2
28 DIDIER PIRONI (F)	Ferrari 126 C	3
29 RICCARDO PATRESE (I)	Arrows A3	4
7 JOHN WATSON (GB)	Marlboro MP 4/1	5
1 ALAN JONES (AUS)	Williams FW 07/B	6
27 GILLES VILLENEUVE (CDN)	Ferrari 126 C	7
3 EDDIE CHEEVER (USA)	Tyrrell 010	8
26 JACQUES LAFFITE (F)	Talbot-Ligier JS17	9
12 NIGEL MANSELL (GB)	Lotus 81	10
20 KEKE ROSBERG (SF)	Fittipaldi F8	11
15 ALAIN PROST (F)	Renault RE 30	12
30 SIEGFRIED STOHR (I)	Arrows A3	13
11 ELIO DE ANGELIS (I)	Lotus 81	14
14 MARC SURER (CH)	Ensign N 181	15
25 JEAN-PIERRE JABOUILLE (F)	Talbot-Ligier JS17	16
23 BRUNO GIACOMELLI (I)	Alfa Romeo 179	17
22 MARIO ANDRETTI (USA)	Alfa Romeo 179	18
4 MICHELE ALBORETO (I)	Tyrrell 010	19
21 CHICO SERRA (BR)	Fittipaldi F8	20
6 HECTOR REBAQUE (MEX)	Brabham BT 49/C	21
31 BEPPE GABBIANI (I)	Osella FA1	22
8 ANDREA DE CESARIS (I)	Mc Laren M29C	23
31 PIER-CARLO GHINZANI (I)	Osella SAI/B	24

PIT STOPS AND RETIREMENTS

Prost : retired second lap, clutch.
Rosberg : retired 10th lap, gearbox.
Jabouille : stopped 10th lap, rear suspension check, then 33rd lap before retiring 35th lap, transmission.
Piquet : retired 11th lap, collision with Jones.
De Cesaris : retired 11th lap, no fourth gear.
Ghinzani : stopped 18th lap, fitted new rear wing.
Jones : crashed 20th lap.
Gabbiani : retired 23rd lap, engine.
Serra : two stops, retiring 29th lap, engine.
Rebaque : retired 40th lap, brakes.

Giro per giro - Runde um Runde - Tour par tour - Vuelta a vuelta - Ronde na ronde - La

Postcard from Zolder

Mechanics and drivers were not alone in demonstrating at Zolder: Belgian spectators show their support for Ligier and for Prost

In the supporting race for Renault R5 Turbos, French rallyman Jean Ragnotti had to move over for Germany's Wolfgang Schutz

A pit poser: he and his motorised skateboard got in everyone's way

The Michelin man tries two wheels: now we know what they mean by "spare tyre"

If oil continues to get more expensive, what chance that one day we'll all be travelling by hang glider?

Jacques Laffite offers some encouragement to a young hopeful in the Formule Renault race

Zolder and chips: an inseparable combination.

Not everyone agrees with these Lotus supporters, but Colin Chapman expects to satisfy them before long!

Zolder's new medical centre, sadly to be in constant use this year

Still no sponsor for Fittipaldi: surely this isn't their idea of a T-car...

A racing fan expresses his views on the FISA FOCA muddle: who are we to disagree with a paying spectator?

Theodore owner Teddy Yip, whose car was only allowed to practise in the (wet) Saturday session of official qualifying

No matter how you dress it up with publicity material, a Rolls Royce will always be a symbol of dignity and class

The lake where our Chief Editor tried to walk on water. Fortunately he survived (after all, he's a frog...)

COMEBACK

Discussing Colin Chapman on the day before the Belgian GP, our colleague Gerard Crombac remarked that "Colin is like a mountaineer who gets his kicks from conquering Everests. His problem is that as soon as he's got to the top and starts to shout he can't be heard. There's no one up there to listen to him!" At Zolder, Chapman had come down from his beloved mountain: he had brought out the old Lotus 81s for his drivers and left the controversial double-chassis 88 in England. There was to be some comfort for him in the excellent result - both drivers in the points - which lay ahead on Sunday. Having stayed away from Imola in silent protest against the most recent ban on the 88, the return of the Lotus team was nothing if not impressive. Financially, there are still question marks hanging over the future of Essex boss David Thieme - himself back in action at Zolder - and the team's circumstances meant that they had only one spare engine for the weekend. Nigel Mansell's amazing race to 3rd place earned him universal plaudits as the revelation of the weekend. And for team leader Elio de Angelis, whose season had started with such high hopes, there was some small compensation for a fine 5th place. (Photos DPPI/Thierry Bovy - Bernard Asset/A + P).

RED HOT TURBOS

Without showing all the speed that they had at Imola, the Zolder performance of the Ferrari 126CK turbocars was once again extremely impressive. For the second consecutive race, both cars covered the full distance after one of them (this time Pironi's) had been in front for several laps. A 4th place finish enabled Gilles Villeneuve to take his first championship points of the season. And the engine is not only reliable, it's got a surprisingly useful rev range: the Scuderia's first priority now will be to start sorting out the handling. There's no doubt that the Italian team is already on its way back to dominance. For this they must thank the evergreen Mauro Forghieri, their farsighted and brilliant chief engineer. (Photos DPPI/ Thierry Bovy, Bernard Asset (A + P).

TEARS OF RAGE

When Nelson Piquet clambered out of his wrecked Brabham, he was shaking with rage over the incident in which his car and Alan Jones's Williams had been involved at the tight Bolderberg corner. As our photograph shows, the two of them were literally side by side at the moment of impact, though it doesn't offer any firm evidence on the question of whether Alan barged past the Brabham or Nelson tried to block a legitimate move. As it happened, each driver remained convinced that he was in the right. With his Latin-American temperament, Nelson remains hot-blooded and quick to react. On this occasion he was unable to stop himself from blaming Jones: "he's crazy, he did it again, just like Canada, he pushed me off. Next time I'll kill him." As these harsh words flooded out, it was noticeable that Piquet was having to fight back his tears. (Photos DPPI/Tierry Bovy - Bernard Asset/A + P).

THREE LEADERS DISAPPOINTED

After 10 laps of the Belgian GP, Didier Pironi was still leading from Nelson Piquet and Alan Jones. The Ferrari driver was already having difficulty in holding them off, but one lap later Piquet was gone, the victim of his own anxiety to keep Jones behind him at any cost. Exit the first would-be winner. On lap 13, with his brakes now fading, Pironi started to lose places. Exit the second hopeful. Finally, on lap 20, Jones' car jumped out of gear as he bent it into a high speed turn, and it went off the the road. Exit the third likely race winner. It was left to a fourth man, the ever-consistent Carlos Reutemann, to walk off with the Belgian GP. (Photo Gérard Aschendorf/Vandystadt).

JACQUES LAFFITE

Jacques Laffite returned to the limelight at Zolder. The cheerful and attacking little Frenchman revived Ligier-Talbot's sagging fortunes with a rousing second place. But Jacques was just as active off the track as on it. He was one of the leaders of the drivers' strike, and when we spoke to him after the race, it was clear that this happy-go-lucky joker no longer derives the same pleasure from Formula 1 that he used to. Perhaps the only satisfaction that he gets from the Grand Prix scene is with the newly reformed Ligier-Talbot team, and the slow but steady progress that he and the team are making.

by Eric BHAT

Why wasn't the team competitive during the first few races of the season?

We didn't know we were going to have to cheat! As far as we were concerned, the six centimeter rule, along with the skirts ban, was one that had to be obeyed. We didn't have hydro-pneumatic suspension, twin spring suspension or any of that stuff. So by conforming to the regulations, we found ourselves uncompetitive. But if you can't beat the others, you join them, so we tried a suspension system in South America, only it didn't work. And now we're right into the season, there are Grands Prix every two weeks for the next month and a half and that leaves very little time to carry out any development. Aerodynamically, I felt that the car was better in Argentina, but we had an engine problem so that came to naught. Now we've proved, here at Zolder as we did at Imola, that we are heading in the right direction. Our real problem is the engine which is still letting us down. All the same, we've picked up three or four seconds in the past month.

The turbo engines appear to be the most powerful in Formula 1, but how does the Matra engine compare with the Cosworth?

Well, it's still a bit of a handicap. The engine is OK at the moment, but there's always room for improvement. The main point is that the Matra doesn't have the same torque as the Cosworth. If we had that torque, then it would be ideal. I suppose I could say that it's not a big problem because we're in a transitional year, but I don't like saying that because everyone in Formula 1 wants to be on top all the time. The fact is that this year we're simply waiting for Matra to get their turbo engine ready. I just hope that's sooner rather than later, because we need it now. Frankly, I don't think anyone's got a chance next year unless they're using a turbocharged engine.

But it looks as though you're stuck with the V12 for the rest of this season. Do you think it's a winner?

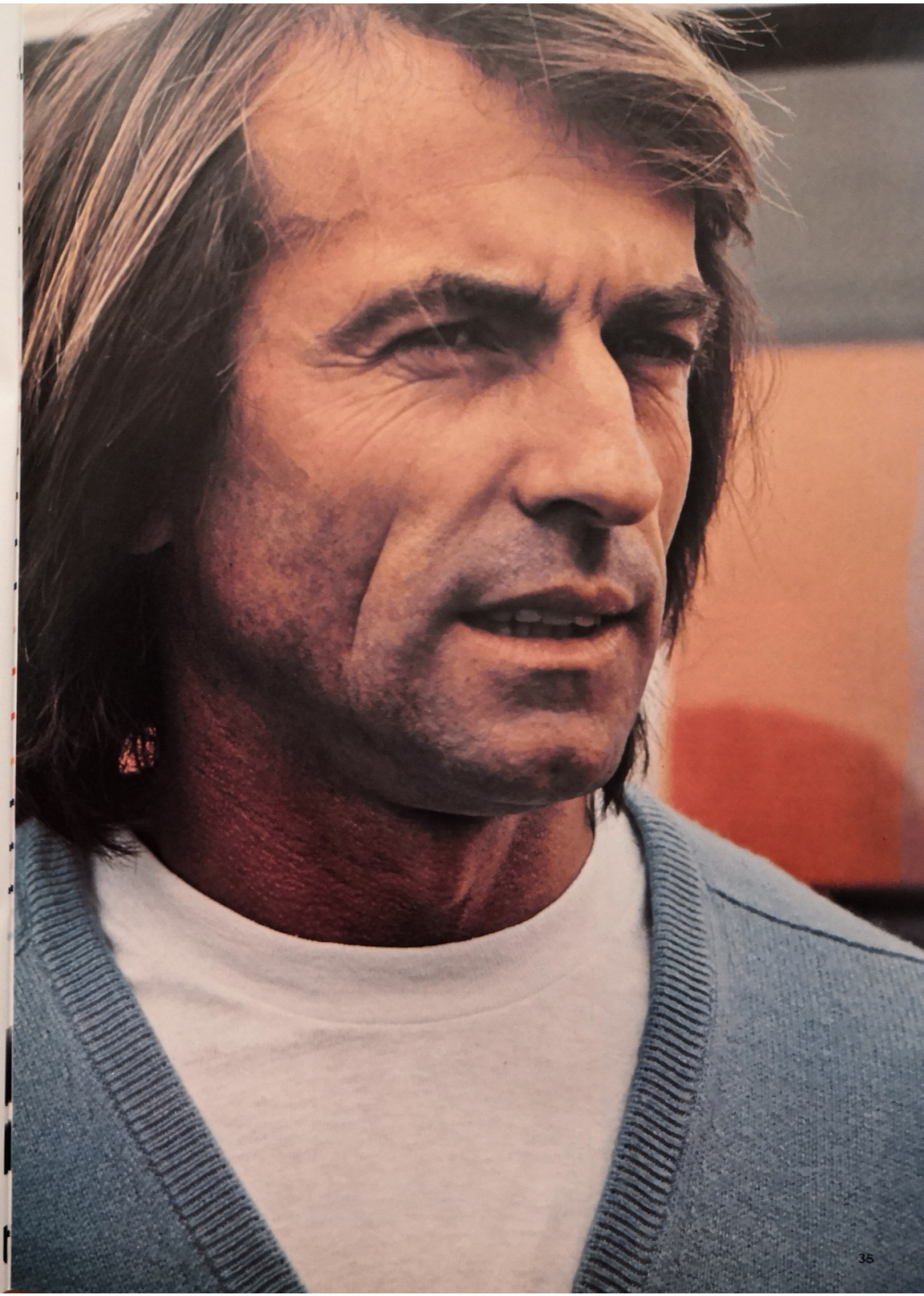
We decided to use this engine so we'll do what we can with it. If the car is good enough, then the engine's a winner when the opportunity presents itself. A win is always on the cards, although luck plays its part too. Take Germany last year for instance. I won but I wasn't the fastest driver on the track. So what? If we're on the first few rows of the grid, we'll be happy. When you start towards the front of the grid, it's always possible to win, especially if the car is handling perfectly, which makes up for that lack of torque.

Your pre-season testing went well, but the first few races haven't reflected that. What has gone wrong?

After the first session at Long Beach, I thought that we were competitive, but I was wrong. The reason for that is quite simple. We didn't interpret the regulations to our advantage. We soon realised that we didn't have a chance. I must admit that I thought we were going to be much better off. But there's light at the end of the tunnel. It's now obvious that all our work over the past two or three months hasn't been in vain. We're getting somewhere now. Little by little we're working our way up the grid, which proves that we're working in the right direction, and that feels good.

How did it feel to start 16th on the grid in Brazil and 21st in Argentina?

How did I feel? It didn't really affect me. I knew that neither drivers nor cars were to blame in Argentina: it was the engines. Ever since I've been in Formula 1, it's never worried me starting 21st on the grid. What would worry me is if I got stuck around 21st on the grid for a whole season, even though Emerson Fittipaldi managed to put up with it. That's not much fun. It's probaly worse for the team than for a driver to be consistently low on the grid. Designers, mechanics and technicians work extremely hard, but they don't earn the same money as drivers, and they don't receive the same recognition. When their car gets stuck on the back of the grid race after race, it's much easier for them to lose heart than for us. A driver's morale remains buoyant because that's the general atmosphere amongst the drivers which is continually boosted by publicity and general acclaim. That can suffer if things are bad for too long. If nothing ever seemed to go right, then I might get depressed. But there are compensations. We may not be winning races at the



moment, but I'm not worried. It's not affecting my morale. What does depress me currently are the politics in Formula 1: FISA, FOCA, the regulations, Balestre, Ecclestone, that business about Tambay at Zolder, all that sort of thing. It's getting ridiculous and quite honestly, I've had enough of it.

Going back to the current Ligier-Talbot problems, don't you regret that things didn't turn out better in 1979 and 1980? It might be a year or two until you're as competitive as you were then.

I don't believe in worrying about the past. You can't go back and rewrite history with lots of 'ifs'. I suppose I could say that I've wasted my time with Ligier, but I don't think so. It's easy to say 'I could have won'. But then again, things might have worked out differently: I could have crashed and injured myself. There's no way of knowing, so I don't get upset about the past. My last two seasons have gone well, even if I might think - and I do - that I could have been world champion in either or both years. That might have been the case if we'd tackled the job differently. But that's easy to say in hindsight. You have to realise just how our morale suffered when Patrick had his accident the first year, and how much money we had to play with.

But finance hasn't been your problem this year.

That's perfectly true, but we haven't exactly proven that everything goes better with money. However, we have made progress. We've done a lot of testing whereas we never did much before. If we'd done as much testing in the last two years as we have since Long Beach, we would have been world champions in 1979 and 1980. You have to look at the problem in that light. On the other hand, if we'd had this year's car during the last two years, we wouldn't have been able to develop it as we have. It took us much longer to solve problems before.

You now have the budget to do the job properly, but isn't it rather complicated having the Ligier people working with Matra, and Talbot overlooking the whole operation? It's not exactly the tight team that it was before.

I find it almost an advantage that the team is different. Obviously Guy Ligier has to explain things to M. Boilot of Talbot and M. Lagardere of Matra. But the basic team is still the same. Now we have another technician and more draughtsmen, and that's a great advantage. We've been able to do a lot more than before, and that's entirely due to Talbot. And I think the Matra people are marvellous. Their engine may not be super competitive, but I don't care. It's a French engine, and that almost makes the car go even better. I find the whole package excellent, and it makes us all that much more determined. That's why I signed a two year contract. The Talbot connection means more money, while the Matra men obviously have tremendous technical experience. They may be a bit old fashioned every now and then, but their experience has got us out of some tight spots. Our biggest problem is to prove to the Talbot people that they're doing the right thing by sponsoring us. But they can't really complain. We're using a new engine and it's a new car. Everything's new, but at least they're benefitting from our experience. That's a tremendous advantage for them, but we're all starting from scratch, we do every year.

But when everything is so new, is it that much fun to start all over again?

What I enjoy is developing the car, driving a more and more competitive car, and then trying to win with it. It's quite simple. I derive satisfaction from starting in ninth place on the grid and finishing second or third, even winning. I'm also enjoying what we're doing at the moment and that's raising the standard of French technology. That's why I wanted to remain in a team that is one hundred per cent French. I could have joined another team, but I'd like to prove to everyone that the Ligier-Talbot equipe can win the world championship.

At one time you could have rejoined the Williams team. Looking at their current record, aren't you sorry that you didn't?

No, not really. I never look back and regret making a decision. I could have joined Williams, but I wonder if I could have done as good a job as Alan Jones has done with Frank and Patrick Head. After all, I don't speak the same language. And other problems might have arisen which might have prevented us from winning the championship. Joining the best team doesn't automatically mean that you're going to win the world championship. Reutemann has often found that. He's joined winning teams, but he hasn't necessarily won the following year. No, I'm perfectly happy with my current team, and I think I shall probably stay with them for the rest of my racing career.

There was much more rivalry between yourself and your last two teammates, Patrick Depailler and Didier Pironi, than there is with Jean-Pierre Jabouille. Does this mean there's more relaxed atmosphere in the team?

Jean-Pierre is still a competitor because I have to be in front of him. The only difference is that I'm working with Jean-Pierre. I always found it difficult to work with Patrick and Didier because I didn't know them so well, so there was always that rivalry between us. Each of us had our little team of mechanics and we were always trying to score points off one another. But Jean-Pierre is a great help, and we're all working together. I wanted him to drive in the team some time ago because I knew just how much of an asset he'd be to us, and he's proving to be just that. Gerard Ducarouge and I used to have technical discussions which I could barely understand. But Jean-Pierre knows what it's all about. He talks to Ducarouge and then we chat about it together. He's a tremendous benefit to the team, and I don't think our relationship will ever change.

If your teammate is no longer a rival, do you still drive as hard?

Aha, so you've noticed that I'm driving like an old woman! No, seriously, of course not. You always drive as hard as you can when you're in the car. Otherwise there's no point in carrying on. I'll stop racing when I no longer have the determination to beat the next guy. People who say that I'm not as fast as I used to be are those who like to knock drivers. If things go badly throughout the season, they are people who'll say "they're still complaining about the engine and tyres. In fact they know one another too well and there's no rivalry between them, so they're not driving hard." That's ridiculous. Jean-Pierre and I want to do well, just as we've always wanted to do well. But what we really want to do is to succeed together, as a partnership, and that's what we're trying to prove to people.

Has Jean-Pierre taken over all technical responsibility from you?

His technical knowledge is a one hundred per cent improvement for the team. Frankly, I don't like that side of racing. I had to be involved in the engineering side when we had our post-practice chats beforehand. But I don't like talking about that side of things because it's always bothered me. Now Jean-Pierre does the talking and he oversees the technical side. He's a great asset, as I've said before. I don't think he realises just how important it has been for the team to benefit from his technical knowledge.

What is noticeable in talking to you is that you remain quiet and calm, despite all the problems you've had so far this season.

I'm now in my seventh season of Grand Prix racing. I've been in racing too long to worry about most things. I've seen cars that didn't work become very competitive, and cars that were quick suddenly become uncompetitive. There's not a lot that hasn't happened to me in Formula 1. So there's not a lot to worry about. We're doing all we can to win. I've never been quite so involved with team and cars as I am this year. We're all working together. We have a big meeting every Monday at the team's base at Vichy. We talk about everything and try and improve everything. Both Jean-Pierre and I are very involved. It's odd really, because ever since Jean-Pierre joined the team, instead of having less to do with the technical aspects, I've been even more involved than before. We've scarcely stopped. I don't seem to be doing anything else these days. I haven't been fishing for ages, I'm playing a lot less tennis; in fact I only seem to be able to play a little golf occasionally.

The reason for this involvement is because we're being paid more than ever before, We're working with people who are new to Formula 1 and we've got to prove to them that we're doing our very best. We're a little older than we were, a little more mature. We've got to work this way, but I enjoy it. It's a different way of working, but it's important. I needed another reason to remain with Ligier, and I have those reasons: Talbot, Matra, Jabouille, and they mean a lot to me.

You've just mentioned a change in your involvement with Ligier, but don't you think that Formula 1 itself has changed in the last five years?

Well the atmosphere these days is dreadful, but it's been worsening for some time. I was in the Formula Renault paddock at Zolder because I'm interested in Jean-Pierre Paoli's son Philippe, who was driving. I was going to see if I could give him some advice. But the atmosphere in that paddock in comparison to Formula Renault paddocks in my days was awful. My rivals were all tremendous people, we got on really well together, but the people at Zolder were a load of petty climbers, far to pre-occupied to talk to anyone else. If I was ten years younger today and thinking of going into motor racing, I wouldn't bother. I'd fly planes or go sailing. Formula 1 is a different world, the highest form of motor sport, but it's not the same as it used to be. I think things are getting worse. A lot of drivers think it's better because they're earning more money, but it's a different job these days. Because we're being paid so much, we have to work for it. We're almost race workers. No, it's not that bad. We've decided to be racing drivers and it's a good job, but it's also very demanding.

How do you think that you've changed over the last five years?

I don't think I've changed that much. I'm wealthier than I used to be, but that's all. I'm still just as determined as ever. I still like driving and I still enjoy racing. At least, I enjoy racing on the track, but in the paddock it's worse than ever. There are days when I'd like to give it all up, and that's a sad reflection on the sport. □

PATRICK TAMBAY: THE HIGHS... AND THE LOW

Patrick Tambay relaxes in the hills behind his home town of Cannes. He now lives there again, after living in London while driving for McLaren

Patrick Tambay's Theodore scored a world championship point in its very first race at Long Beach

At the end of the 1979 Grand Prix season, when Patrick Tambay was on the verge of leaving the Grand Prix scene, there was nothing very susprising about his departure. People were beginning to think that he was out of his depth in Formula 1. But after a year's break, he's back, and he's already brilliantly demonstrated that he should never have been away. The full season that he spent in the doldrums (or, more specifically, in the Can-Am) had a profound effect on him, producing more changes in his approach to racing than anything that happened to him in a career that went back to 1972. He is now a complete driver in every meaning of the word: fully motivated, hardworking and full of enthusiasm. On top of that, he has acquired a remarkable maturity.

When he was questioned in Montreal, Patrick Tambay was a disilluioned man. *"I've no idea what I'm going to do,"* he said. *"I could probably join one of the smaller teams like ATS or Ensign, but that's not really what I want. It would be useless to flounder around like I've been this year. I'm not really interested in having to bust a gut to get on to 20th place on the grid or to qualify. I've had a bellyful of that this year already."*

A month later, I ran into him in Paris. As usual when a journalist is chatting with a driver who's still fishing for a decent car before the next season, I asked him if he'd been able to establish any promising contacts. His reply was as aggressive as it was surprising. *"I'm getting pissed off with this type of question,"* he said. *"Just because you haven't heard my name mentioned in connection with any of the teams, you seem to imagine that I'm not going to find anything. I'm working on it in my own quiet way. I don't have to tell everyone my secrets... and I don't need tostart rumours or to make statements that I might regret later."*

Inevitably, however, it was difficult not to imagine that his lack of news indicated that there was actually nothing to report. It seemed that his disappointment stemmed, whether he liked it or not, from that fact that he was going to have to leave Formula 1. And when it happened, it was quite clear that he didn'tlike it...

He based his hopes for the 1980 season one the Can-Am. He already had one Can-Am title to his credit (1977), and his second attempt was destined to produce a second.

In March 1981, Formula 1 welcomed him back, at Long Beach. A year before, he'd been there as a spectator, but this time he was competing again, for he'd

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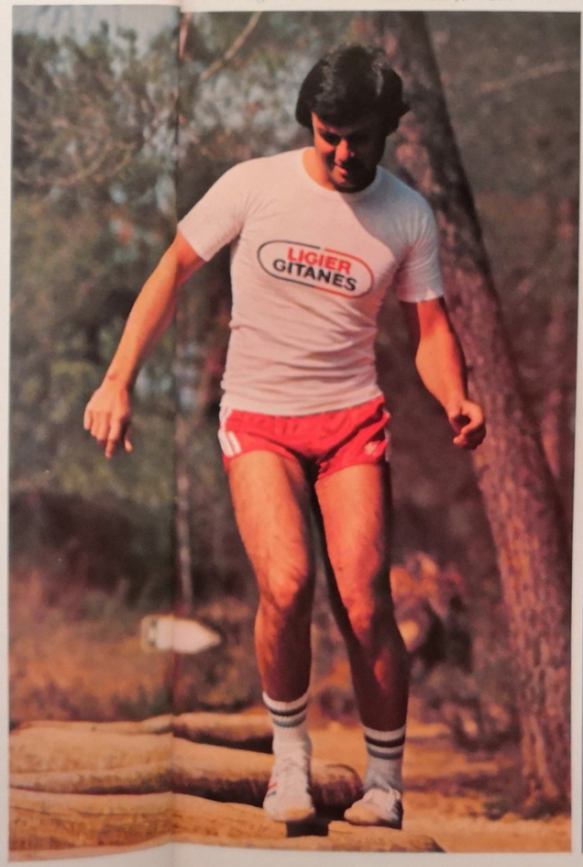
been signed to drive the Theodore "low budget racer" which had been designed in record time by the British engineer Tony Southgate.
In accepting the seat offered to him by Theodore, however, Patrick appeared to be moving in to the very situation which he had avoided so assiduously in 1979, for only a wild optimist would have imagined that the new outfit had more than an outside chance of even qualifying. What was it, then, which had persuaded Patrick to change his mind and get himself involved with something that he had rejected so energetically only 18 months earlier?
The reason lies in his very different approach. Nowadays he can look at things differently. *"I'm facing this season in a completely new frame of mind compared with October 1979,"* he explains. *"When I went back to racing in America, I was in a complete blank. I was stifled. I could hardly bear the sight of my own face in the mirror when I was shaving. I wasn't at all happy inside. But by making a complete break I discovered just how much I wanted to compete in Formula 1 again. My ambition was rekindled. The Can-Am was good for me, because I was winning races all over again, even though I knew that Formula 1 was what I really wanted to do. I believed that F1 was the place for me. So of course I had to make a comeback..."*
Patrick's exile was by no means a waste of time, however. The season in North America gave him a revitalised temperament. As he gradually allowed himself to forget the disappointments of the two years at McLaren, he was able to analyse more clearly the causes which had led to the end of his "first" F1 career. He was realistic enough with himself to understand that it wasn't necessarily a matter of personal shortcomings. And that's rare!
"I felt myself getting more and more detached, I was even losing interest in Formula 1. I was allowing my ability to be blunted by the lack of success. When everything is going well for a driver, he can get himself worked up into a state of mind that makes it impossible for him to go even quicker. I didn't have that state of mind. I was fed up with all the things which had happened to me in the team, I was even getting disappointed with the sport of racing. OK, so McLaren Racing was on its way down. In these circumstances, I admit that it was up to me to keep my confidence high, but I was getting the wrong outlook on Formula 1. Instead of getting stuck into racing, and giving it everything I'd got, I began to stop caring altogether. Ever since 1977, when I had come into Formula 1, things had been easy for me. I moved into a top team virtually straight away, so when things started to go baldy I reckon that I was caught off balance. At the same time I was in the unhappy position of having to stand by while Gilles Villeneuve was having a great time in a car which I could have driven. I started to have a twisted view of what F1 really was".
The paradox of Patrick's position was that being so far away from F1 eventually made it easier for him to realise what he'd been doing wrong: *"being separated from it made me realise how important to me it all was: it certainly gave me the motivation I needed to try and get back. I realised that I had made some mistakes, and that helped me to understand the sort of effort that you have to put in to deserve your place, and to succeed. I'm sure that it left me with a fresh approach."*
Once he'd made the decision to return - and it was less a decision than a powerful desire - Patrick had to think about the ways and means. There was one method that stood above all: to accept a place regardless, *"even if meant carrying the car virtually on my back"*, just to be in Formula 1. He had not taken long to realise that a string of victories in any other category do not necessarily amount to an automatic passport into Grand Prix racing and a good seat. *"Formula 1 people greatly underestimate the value of the Can-Am"*, says Patrick. *"That's the way it is: I can't change it. Look at it another way, though: once you're in Grand Prix racing, even with one of the minor teams, you're there. You're right under their noses. And if you do well, people notice it immediately."*
Apart from his anxiety to make a comeback, it was a matter of logical analysis which persuaded Patrick to accept the Theodore, despite any worries he might have had about its possible lack of competitivity. *"The technical situation was all-new at the beginning of this year. Everyone knew that they would be getting the same tyres, wheel widths had been reduced and skirts had been banned. It was obvious that these changes would iron out some of the inequalities between teams. In the second place, I was well aware that several teams planned to be turning to new, untested techniques which would involve them in a long period of sorting-out. I was thinking particularly of the Matra V12 engine that Ligier had decided to use, and the V6 turbo at Ferrari. I realised that if Southgate could let me have a god conventional car, with a spot of built-in reliability, then we'd be able to keep our hand in."* It turned out to be something of a successful prophesy, because everything went exactly as Patrick had hoped. At least they did until the Theodore team arrived at Zolder.
It must be said that the Theodore record this year, while encouraging, was not entirely expected. In four races the car has retired only once, showed strongly in three, and scored a point in one of them, its debut event at Long Beach. Patrick, too, has done everything that could have been expected of him, and more.
That's saying a lot of a driver who doesn't have a T-car, because if he's sticking his neck out he must be aware that he can't afford to go off the road. Nor is it easy to be sure that you're going to qualify for every race, because it only takes a little mechanical trouble to cut short your practising. The team has to run a fine Line between the requirements of economy (to ensure that there are always enough spares to cover emergencies) and those of the designer, who needs as much running time as possible in order to get the car sorted out and to get an idea of future developments. At the same time, it's the driver's job not only to get as far up the field as he can but also to try to stay out of the way of those little racing incidents which so often stand between him and a finish in the points, not to mention the all-important prize money. Every overtaking manœuvre has to be carefully calculated, every move undertaken with perfect concentration in order to avoid errors.
In all this, Patrick Tambay has succeeded. Right from the start of the "official" season at Long Beach. For him, the proof that things are getting better is that he's making far more progress than he did with McLaren, a team with a much more solid background.
"The difference (with McLaren)," he says, *"is that the Theodore people have shown complete confidence in me. They never question the information I give them about the car, and of course there's no double-checking with the team's other driver because I'm the only one. We're only a little outfit, and I get involved in everything that's going on. But the really important thing is this atmosphere of great mutual trust which I've mentioned."*
Thus it was, until Zolder anyway, that the F1 world had at least one driver who may not have been winning races ou-

The South of France, sun and fewer trans-Atlantic trips makes for a healthier racing driver

Mr and Mrs Tambay; Denna is American



tright, nor even qualifying at the front, who was happy with his position. That is an unusual state of affairs, but it's characteristic of the new Patrick Tambay. In the old days at McLaren, even when he was qualifying higher than he is now, he had a reputation as a "moaner," someone who always had a little complaint, or some reason why he wasn't doing better. This year he's not moaning anymore. When there are technical problems (and he's had a few), he can put his finger on the fault without making a big fuss about it. *"What I really like about the team is that we're in Formula 1 and not mucking about with anything else. There are no pressures from sponsors. We're not mixed up in internal bickerings like the major manufacturer's teams. Just Formula 1."*
And everything was fine until the Belgian GP. That's where the team's real difficulties began: the Thedore was not allowed on the track in the first qualifying session. As everyone knows, the Concord Agreement limits the number of cars on the track to 30, but permits the limit to be altered provided that the change has the unanimous agreement of all the constructors. There was to be no agreement, understandably, from Enzo Osella, whose cars are having enough trouble qualifying.
But though the Belgian setback was to be a painful one for the team from Garretts Green, what happened at Zolder demonstrated the esteem in which Patrick and the boys are held.
From the driving point of view, he put on a dazzling display. Banned from Friday afternoon's official session, it was only thanks to the withdrawal of a Toleman that he was able to take part in Saturday qualifying. On a track which was soaking wet, there was never more than a very slim chance that he would make it.
He had one hour in which to do it. In the course of a non-stop effort, he demonstrated a spendid fault-free style, despite the slippery conditions. Despite his obvious anger, he kept enough control over himself not to be put on edge, which would have been disastrous.
Lap after lap he ran, knowing that every time a car went through a turn, a little piece of the circuit would dry out a fraction more. There was still the remotest of chances.
But there was another reason for Patrick to try so hard: not so much a matter of trying to qualify as to satisfy himself. *"It was the only way for me to show how I felt about the weekend and its frustrations and injustice. I'm completely worn out. I would have liked to been able to forget everything that hapened, so I drowned my sorrows in driving the car. When you're in that sort of mood, it's almost as though you're racing with your own imagination. You're concentrating so hard that you become almost part of the car itself. I felt like that at Imola, during the race. I got into the mood at Zolder, too, for five or six minutes. When you get to that pitch of excitement, I tell you, it's fantastic."*
But the effort fell short by two seconds, or the ten minutes that it took for the track to dry after the flag had fallen... or by the gear lever which broke in the final moments. Two seconds off the pace in the wet... and the skies cleared almost immediately. Patrick mentioned it without bitterness, for he was still savouring the six ecstatic minutes of oneness with his car.
Patrick Tambay has indeed proved that he's ready to accept the responsibilities of his profession. □

E. B

RENAULT'S NEW TURBOCAR

The latest example of turbocar technology, Régie Renault's neat-looking RE30, made its first appearance almost three months ago in a private test session held at the secluded Nogaro circuit in south-west France. Unfortunately, the result of its first public appearance - in practice at Zolder - was a decision not to race it. With its short chassis and lighter all-up weight, it had looked like being the ideal weapon not only for Zolder but also for Renault's hopes of winning the 1981 world championship, for it incorporates all the experience that the men from Viry-Châtillon have acquired in four tough seasons as Formula 1 competitors.

by Giorgo PIOLA

Gérard Larrousse and his men had been looking forward to racing the RE30 ever since the start of the season, because they're obviously confident that it will be very competitive. The RE20 which they've been running was no more than a development of the RS10, but the latest car is very different. This is no development car. Its sole purpose is to win the world championship, and it has been designed without compromises. Its official debut wasn't very startling, but then most new cars suffer teething troubles. However, they don't hide the fact that Renault's new car is technically fascinating and also very advanced.

Since the end of last season, the technical men at Renault have been concentrating on building this latest car. They've virtually ignored the older RE20, even though it would have to be raced for the first few Grands Prix of 1981. It was of major importance that the new car be lighter than the old. Any turbocharged car is likely to be heavier than its normally aspirated rivals because the engine is so complicated. There are a number of accessories that have to be fitted to the car, such as the turbos themselves, the heat exchangers and the increased fuel load. In order to shave off a few kilos, designer Michel Tetu has had to construct a lighter monocoque.

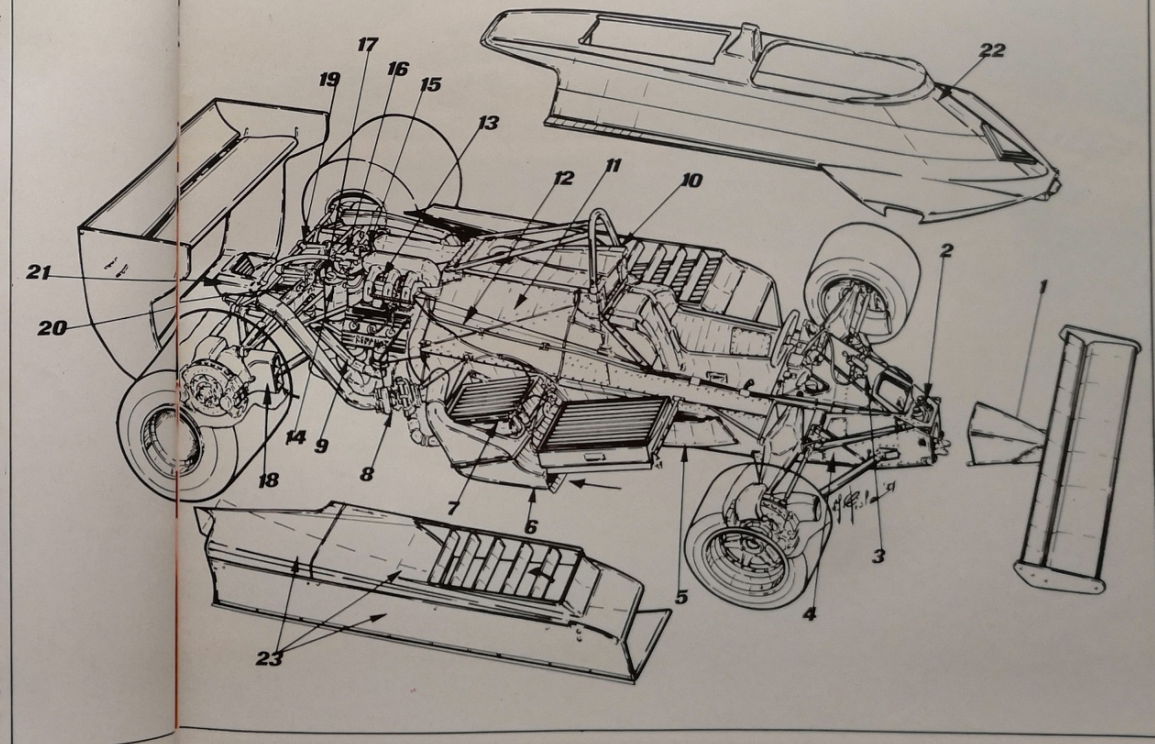
Tetu used a computer to help him establish the exact dimensions and strength of each section of the monocoque. The roll hoop that held the steering wheel of the RE20 has been dispensed with on the RE30. The five fabricated bulkheads on the 20 have been replaced by three machined castings and two fabricated bulkheads on the RE30. It's interesting to note that the Regie has not resorted to carbon fibre in the quest for a lighter car, as other teams have. Carbon fibre is know to be light and rigid, but its behaviour under impact has yet to be fully researched. This new Renault chassis has been constructed to the safety regulations that don't come into force until next year. There's a 20 centimeter wide crushable side structure to protect the chassis, and a 30 centimeter extension in front of the pedal box.

More weight has been saved by using lighter bodywork and a new gearbox. Although the rotating parts of the gearbox are still Hewland FG400, the Renault men have cast their own gearbox casing for the first time. Into this they have incorporated the oil tank which was previously situated in the spacer between the engine and gearbox. This spacer no longer exists on the new car, which has meant that the RE30 wheelbase is 13 centimeters shorter. The shock absorbers - previously mounted on the spacer - now pick up directly from the gearbox. The rear suspension is conventional.

Because the rear wheels are now further forward than before, the turbochargers have also had to be repositioned so that they are now slanting. The intercoolers have also been modified. They no longer look like long aluminium boxes but more like conventional radiators, mounted in the side pods behind the oil and water radiators. Air is fed to the turbochargers and their intercoolers through ducts in the side pods beneath the normal radiators. Finally, there's a new electronic fuel metering device which has been developed by Bosch.

The week before the Belgian Grand Prix, the Renault team tested one of the new cars (two have been built already) with a brake servo system and hydro-pneumatic suspension. Both systems operate from gearbox operated pumps. The braking system has already been used this season and was developed by AP in Leamington Spa. Renault's hydro-pneumatic suspension system isn't new: the team began work on it last year, but its objective is to maintain a constant ride height reducing the detrimental effects of body roll and porpoising. The Renault system doesn't interconnect all four wheels. Instead the front and the rear suspensions are paired off because of differing aerodynamic loads, front and rear. However, the system wasn't in use during the Belgian Grand Prix. All the same, Tetu says that it's inevitable that the team will have to use this system eventually.

The car's aerodynamics have been considerably modified since its first outing at Nogaro. The central part of the car, which is 12 centimeters lower than the previous model, is unchanged, but the side pods have been completely revised. They are much lower, as they are on most other Formula 1 cars. Generally speaking, the new Renault looks a much more effective racer than its predecessor. □



1 - Latest nose shape, incorporating large front wing

2 - Brake servo system, hydraulically operated from gearbox-driven pump. Spacer between pedal and pump

3 - Ride height correction system (front suspension)

4 - All-new chassis

5 - Side pod wing section

6 - Air duct for turbocharger and intercooler

7 - New intercooler

8 - Turbocharger unit, now forward mounted at an angle

9 - Revised wastegate exhaust

10 - Bodywork above fuel tank

11 - Fuel tank (now lower and longer)

12 - Pipes to hydraulic suspension (not in use for Belgian GP)

13 - Bosch electronic fuel metering system

14 - Reservoir for hydraulic fluid

15 - Compressed air bottle to adjust suspension height

16 - Front ride height correction system

17 - New gearbox casing, narrower and shorter, mounting directly to the rear of the engine

18 - Air scoop for rear brakes

19 - Anti-roll bars

20 - Gearbox-mounted shock absorbers

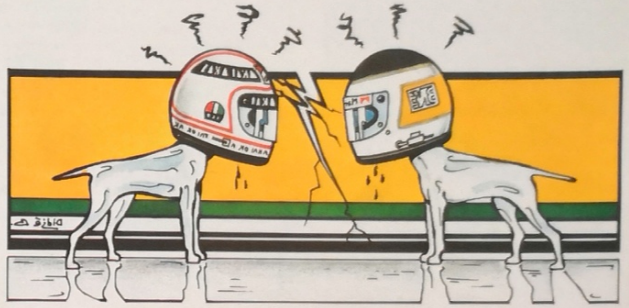
21 - Breather for gearbox oil

22 - Cockpit

23 - Three-piece sidepods

A MATCHED PAIR

A spring has broken in the well-oiled machinery of the Williams team, resulting in a definite chill in the relationship between Carlos Reutemann and Alan Jones. Once courteous with each other, now they are tense: it already seems inevitable that the result will be the de-



parture of one or the other of them at the end of this season. With victory in the Belgian GP, the Argentine has increased still further his points advantage at the top of the championship table: he now looks the most likely candidate to take over the title which Alan Jones still holds. Carlos Reutemann and Alan Jones nourish the same ambition, yet their association has as much warmth as a pair of Staffordshire dogs outstaring each other on the mantlepiece.

by Keith BOTSFORD

Unlike piccolo players, mathematicians or seven-foot basketball players, Number Two drivers are not born but made. They may be, and often are as skilled and determined as their Number One drivers, but that status is not their allotted place in life. Carlos Reutemann, just like - at various stages in their careers - Ronnie Peterson, Clay Regazzoni or Jochen Mass, is a Number Two driver. He was hired as such, and presumably read with care the contract which he signed with Frank Williams at the beginning of the 1980 season.

Now, a Number Two driver is not always and in all circumstances Number Two in his team. Any number of circumstances may play into his hands and create a virtual equality between the two drivers: an accident to his Number One, consistently superior performance, a decision in his favour by his team-manager. Which is to say that the Number Two job is not a *natural* one within the profession; a driver is a second driver because team tactics require it and the particular circumstances of a particular day make him one.

You can take it for gospel, then, that if in any particular race Carlos Reutemann leads his team-mate Alan Jones, and builds on that lead, and Jones cannot make an appropriate challenge, then Carlos will win that race on his own merits. In fact, there is only *one* circumstance under which, in the Williams team at least, Carlos can be forced to assume the sackcloth and ashes of a number two, and that is, by the terms of his contract, if both he and Jones are in the lead at a race, the third car is not gaining on either of them but is left safely in their wake, and the time-difference between Carlos and Jones is *seven seconds or less*. In those circumstances, and those circumstance alone, Carlos is required by contract to slow down and let the world champion win.

A similar contract was offered to Clay Regazzoni after his season as Number Two and Clay declined it, preferring, as he said, to *"live my own life"* without hassles in a one-car team. But Carlos, coming off a long career at the top, but never at the very top, changing teams as often as schoolboys their socks, never really satisfying either his own ambitions or his expectations, signed. Nor was it that the Number Two drive at Williams was not sought after by many. By the end of 1979, the Williams 07 was clearly a winning car and the queue at the Williams motor home was long.

Nonetheless, the situation at Williams has been, from the start, a curious mixture of the clear-cut and the ambiguous. Clear-cut, in that Frank Williams, Alan Jones and Patrick Head have all understood, all along, what the relative status of the two drivers was; ambiguous in that Carlos, at least in the eyes of his Number One driver, has not always lived up to the letter - or even the spirit - of his contract. Says Jones of 1980: *"I honestly can't think of a single instance in 1980 when Carlos physically helped me to win.*

Alright, 1980 is 1980. It is 1981 that is the problem, for Carlos, after his comfortable if unhappy walkover in Belgium, leads the table with 34 points to the 22 of Piquet and the 18 of Jones. And how did this come about? In part by accident - as at Imola, where Jones could not get his car or himself into top form - and in part - as in Brazil, where Carlos ignored team instructions to finish ahead of Jones - by design. As Jones now says: *"It is not a question any more of rebuilding a relationship that never existed very much beyond the professional courtesies. The damage has been done, and I simply no longer trust Carlos. Nor have I any reason to do so."*

The Jones point of view on the matter is unequivocal. *"It is not for nothing,"* he says, *"that we have those numbers on the cars. Mine says Number One and his says Number Two. The contract isn't just for fun, it is a contract to prevent accidents, it is a contract to enable each driver to play his part for the benefit of the team."*

A contract to prevent accidents? *"Certainly. I can't imagine anything worse than two drivers on the same team racing against each other. That is an invitation to trouble. But that is the least of it. The real question is how a Number One drives a good race if he cannot have confidence in his Number Two. Supposing that I lead in a race, but I know that, at Zolder for instance, I have to conserve my brakes in order to finish, or at another race, that I must slow down to save my tyres; how can I do so when I have Carlos behind me?*

"I know people will accuse me of bleating and wanting to win not on my merits but on a technicality, but they are wrong. No disciplined, professional Number One driver can handle a Number Two driver who is racing against his Number One. No doubt that is why Frank disciplined Carlos in the only way a grand prix driver understands, by hurting him in his pocket-book."

The situation between the two men is of course not so simple as that. It may well be possible - as Carlos sees it - for the Argentine driver to lift the championship from his team-mate by sheer skill. No contract talk is valid unless the drivers find themselves in a very specific situation. For the rest, it's each man for himself. As Jones well understands: *"Look, Ronnie Peterson, who was not just a good but a great driver, spent a whole season being Mario Andretti's Number Two. Well, he wasn't the Number Two for long. He knew how to wheel and deal within the team, he knew how to get the right mechanics and set his car up right: in no time at all he was equal Number One. He had proved his point. But there were also more than a few times when Ronnie was a million seconds faster than Mario, but Ronnie, being the gentleman he was, honoured his contract and let Mario win the championship. Which is as it should be. Mario, like myself, was the senior driver, the opportunity to be champion was his by right. In the same way, I joined Williams when they were nothing much, and the world championship was a team effort, all of us growing together. Carlos was brought into the team when Clay left. His job was, and is, the same as Clay's."*

AN UNHAPPY WINNER

When he had completed the slowing-down lap after winning the Belgian GP, Carlos Reutemann stepped out of his car and immediately seemed to be detached from his achievement. He stumbled towards the guardrail and lay down with his back to it, clearly exhausted. Only then did he think about removing his helmet and fireproof balaclava.

A race winner is normally swamped within seconds under a mass of mechanics, journalists, photographers, race officials and hangers-on of all kinds. On this occasion, however, Carlos's obvious need for a moment of personal reflection was respected - for a few seconds at least - by everyone. Evidently there was something not quite right.

Carlos later explained what he had felt: *"I was tired out. At that moment there was only one thing on my mind. I wanted to leave, I wanted to get away."*

Having made sure with his mechanics that everything was in order with the car (six centimetres!), Carlos turned his attention to the podium ceremony and the presentation. At least, he did so in the physical sense. Psychologically, though, he might have been a million miles away. There wasn't so much as the suggestion of a smile on his face. Race winner Carlos Reutemann was far from joyful. In spirit at least, there was no doubt that his mind was on Giovanni Amadeo, the unfortunate mechanic from the Osella team. And as the last note of *God Save the Queen* faded away, Carlos left the podium. A moment or two to chat with journalists, then he took flight.

Once he'd gone, there were the statistics to calculate. Carlos had just scored championship points in the 15th consecutive race. This is an unprecedented achievement, especially when his victory in the non-championship South African GP, and a 3rd place on last year's Codasur Rally, are also taken into account. There seems to be no stopping him! But he's not impressed: *"OK, I've got the record, but it doesn't help me. From now on, the record will probably play against me: the chances are against me finishing races. It can't go on forever..."*

Knowing Carlos, he'll think about the situation long and hard. If he's going to take the championship he's going to have to carry on clocking up points. When it comes to racing, he's a great "thinker," he enjoys making forecasts. As someone said of this side to his character, *"Carlos has a great chance of being champion this year. The season started late this year. Instead of having three months to get himself psyched up, he had a full six months to think about it."* Nor was that a joke, it was a serious remark about Carlos's ability to recharge his personal batteries.

Reutemann World Champion? If he reads this, he will flinch and probably cross his fingers. But consider what Jody Scheckter said only recently: *"I would really like Carlos to be champion this year. Nelson is young, there's still time for him. Carlos just gets better and better as he gets older. Now he's a really great driver."* There could be no more objective comment, for Jody - had he chosen to be subjective - would have nominated his close friend Gilles Villeneuve...

E.B.

PROST Scriptum

If I ever think back to the Belgian Grand Prix 1981, three things will immediately spring to mind: the awful atmosphere throughout the weekend, the problems we had with the Renault RE30, and my very brief, one-lap race.

But on reflection, I don't think I'm going to bother too much about the Belgian Grand Prix. I think it's best forgotten.

On the other hand, there is a fourth point that made me smile, and I just might remember that: Rene's little brush with the cops. My honourable and respected team leader didn't qualify, so he accepted an invitation from them to spend Sunday with the Belgian police force!

But I'm not joking at his expense because they locked him up, there were other amusing points. This guy gets on his car bonnet on the way out of the circuit because of some petty queue jumping. And he doesn't want to get off the bonnet, so he gets a free ride for a few kilometers to our hotel. But what was really funny was Rene's expression when he saw the police car arrive - that I won't forget. Shortly after, Rene went off to the kitchen to make a sandwich or something... and I didn't see him again for a while.

In terms of racing, I've got news for you: I'm becoming a very good journalist instead of winning the world championship. And I'm not talking about these columns which cause me sleepless nights trying to think up what I'm going to write about.

No, the reason I'm thinking of journalism is because I spend so much time watching Grand Prix races. Apart from the Argentine Grand Prix, where I had to drive the car to the finish unfortunately, I can remember everything that's happened in all the Grands Prix this season. The reason for this is my excellent powers of observation - but you know that already! - and the fact that I've been leaning on the pit rail for most of the race.

If this goes on much longer, I'm going to make up for lack of prize money by signing a TV contract: at least any TV company can be almost certain that I'll spend most of the race in the commentary box.

My last Grand Prix International column was all about the frustration felt by a driver when he retires on the first lap. A familiar story, you might think. I would have been well advised to take a carbon copy...

Enough of this nonsense: it's just a bleak period, everyone has them during their Grand Prix career, just as Carlos Reutemann is going through the complete opposite at the moment. That'll happen to me one day.

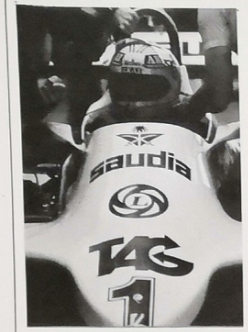
But when one is jinxed, it seems to go on and on for ever. It's not just that I seem to keep disappearing from the field within minutes of the green light coming on, but that similar luck seems to afflict our testing. That's one of the reasons that we had trouble with our new Renault 30 at Zolder. The first time we tested the car, months ago, it was a sunny day at Nogaro. But ever since, it's rained virtually every day we've taken the car to a circuit. It rained the week before the Belgian Grand Prix when we went testing at Zolder, which is why we had no inclination of the trouble we suffered the first day of official practice.

Before we went to Belgium, we had a day's testing at Dijon, and the car went very well. It was faster than the RE20 with which we did back-to-back tests, so we were confident.

But at Zolder the car handled like a bowl of rice pudding, and weaved around under braking and in the fast corners. It was almost taking off over the bump after the back chicane. But I think the RE30 has tremendous potential. In tight corners and chicanes it handles a lot better than the 20 because it's lighter and has less tendency to understeer.

On the other hand, we had this problem in the faster corners. I say "had" because the technicians went into the wind tunnel on the Tuesday after the race and they've apparently sorted out the problem. The car will be aerodynamically modified for Monaco. It's something quite small, but very important.

I hope that I can give you a good race report next time: my race report. I won the Formula 3 race at Monaco in 1979 where I met Princess Grace after the event. Maybe I'll have the chance to meet her again this time. Five o'clock on Sunday afternoon, OK? On the other hand, I only did a few yards of the race last year. Perhaps that was when my luck changed, and maybe it will change back again.



OK, AYJAY ?

by Alan Jones

Motorsport is too dangerous and too complicated a business for the various participants to start interfering with each other's jobs. I have said this many times before, and the unfortunate events at the Belgian Grand Prix have done nothing to change my mind.

There was a demonstration on the grid before the start of the race in which most of the mechanics and 13 of the drivers took part. I wasn't one of them. Whatever the importance of their arguments (and I certainly sympathised with the mechanics), I do not think that the timing was right for another piece of aggravation. Above all, I believe that Formula 1 has been through enough turmoil already in recent months. I think that the sponsors and the public at large are getting bewildered by it all.

Looking at it objectively, it's difficult to find anything to criticise in the actual organisation of the Belgian GP. The race officials had got wind of what was going to happen on the grid, so they made sure to inform all the drivers at the briefing that they intended to start the race at three o'clock. All the drivers were there, and we were told that those who wanted to get out of their cars could do so, and that those who wanted to stay in their cars and race could do so.

If there was fault, it was in the behaviour of certain drivers who went to their cars late and didn't move away from the dummy grid until several minutes after the green flag had been given for the formation lap.

The recognised procedure when a driver has, for any reason, not been able to join the last parade lap in formation is for him to take up position at the back of the grid. At Zolder there were several drivers who refused to wait at the back; instead, they weaved their way through to their grid positions.

The rest of us, meanwhile, were forced to wait in position for minutes and minutes. I know that I was not the only one whose water temperature was up to 120-odd degrees before the light went red to start the countdown.

Understandably, there is now an investigation going on to find out just what happened before the Arrows mechanic came onto the grid. But remember that it was a moment of high tension. The cars were on the grid, the engines were running, and the starter was well aware that at least two drivers were already in difficulties because of their long wait.

If the starter hadn't seen the mechanic (who apparently ducked under the rear wing of Patrese's car to investigate something), then there was no reason for him not to have started the race. After all, that's what we had all gone to Belgium to do. And it brings me back to my original point, ie that racing drivers should drive racing cars and organisers should organise.

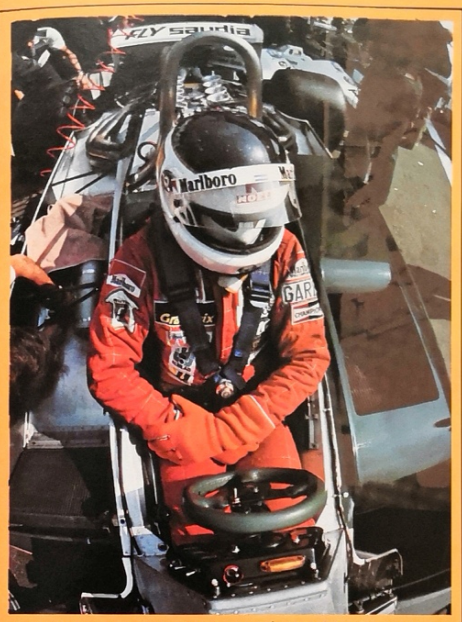
You will be able to read elsewhere in GPI about what happened to me in the Belgian GP. Some people will say that it was my fault that I didn't manage to cram the car back into gear before it ran off the road. To be honest, though, I have given up caring what people say. Even when the issues are pretty clear, only about 50 per cent of them seem to get it right.

If I were to worry about the 50 per cent of them who get it wrong, then I wouldn't have time to drive racing cars. I alone know what happened when I crashed, because I was the bloke in the cockpit. And believe you me, when I found myself free-wheeling into that flat-in-fourth right hand bend I had every incentive to get it back into gear.

In the fraction of a second available, I tried my hardest to find a cog. Then my left side wheels hit the dirt and that was the end of my Belgian GP.

My left leg was pretty badly scalded by the hot water from my radiator, in fact I've got second-degree burns. The people at the London Hospital had to cut away all the skin, and I expect to be pretty sore at Monaco. All going well (which means barring any infection getting into the wound), I shall be able to race at Monte Carlo. Naturally, I'm following the advice of my doctors.

They are, after all, the experts.



SAUDIA LEYLAND WILLIAMS

Williams-Ford FW 07/11:
Alan Jones (AUS)
Williams-Ford FW 07/12:
Carlos Reutemann (RA)
Williams-Ford FW 07/14:
spare.

When practice began on Friday morning, both the Williams drivers's race cars were fitted with the inevitable hydro-pneumatic suspension and new skirts. The spare, however, was not brought up to the latest specification until Saturday morning. But the Williams team's suspension is more hydro-mechanical than hydro-pneumatic. The compressed air that is used on many cars to keep the car in its "up" position until a certain speed, has been replaced by a 400 kilo spring. When the car is in motion, this spring is compressed above a certain speed which allows the hydraulic liquid to flow into the suspension system linked to the springs. When the car slows, the hydraulic liquid flows out of the system as the spring lifts the bodywork again. Alan Jones set fastest time on the Friday, but when his car returned to the pits and was checked for the usual six centimeter ground clearance, it was found that it didn't conform and the time was disallowed. Jones chose the spare car the next day but never had a chance to bump teammate Reutemann off pole position. Reutemann took the lead on the 20th lap of the race when Jones, who had already tangled with Piquet, crashed out of the race.

TALBOT GITANES

Ligier-Matra JS 17/02:
Jacques Laffite (F)
Ligier-Matra JS 17/03:
Jean-Pierre Jabouille (F)

There were a number of modifications to the Ligiers at Zolder. Firstly, all cars were fitted with Campagnolo wheels which are lighter than the Gottis previously used. Secondly the cars were fitted with a three piece rear wing, and finally Jabouille's car had a higher roll-over bar which had been judged too low at Imola. But their ride height correction system, part hydro-pneumatic but with some driver control and developed by Citroen, caused a certain political furore. A tiny computer linked to a gearbox pressure valve works the system. As well as this, there is an automatic system which corrects the ride height in an attempt to reduce chassis roll and porpoising, while the driver is alerted to the exact state of the car by a warning light. But it didn't help Jean-Pierre Jabouille very much. In both practice and race he was slowed by poor handling, to the extent that he stopped in the pits on five different occasions during the race, finally retiring with broken transmission shortly before half distance. Laffite got himself up to third place on the 12th lap after taking it easy during the opening laps. When Jones retired, Laffite was able to continue to second place behind Reutemann, despite the loss of first gear.

ESSEX LOTUS

Lotus-Ford 81/3:
Elio de Angelis (1)
Lotus-Ford 81/1:
Nigel Mansell (GB)
Lotus-Ford 81/2:
spare.

As the Lotus 87 tested during the previous week at Zolder and at Silverstone wasn't considered to be competitive enough quite yet, the Lotus team brought three old faithful Lotus 81s to Zolder. But the 87 should make its debut at Monaco, and it's just possible that a Lotus 88 might reappear in B-spec. Chapman has modified the car: it still has two chassis but he lobbied a number of other team managers at Zolder and they appeared to have no objections.

The team's spare car was fitted with a different type of suspension system to those fitted to other cars in the paddock. The front and rear suspensions each have their own compressed air bottle mounted in the left side pod. On the Saturday, Elio de Angelis tried this spare car and decided to use it in the race. But the Lotus cars still suffer from understeer, particularly Mansell's. Even so, the Englishman preceded his Italian teammate both in practice and the race. But it was an excellent result for the team, and one that brought a smile to the lips of both black-hatted sponsor and team patron.

Cockpits

FERRARI SEFAC

Ferrari 126 C/052:
Gilles Villeneuve (CDN)
Ferrari 126 C/050:
Didier Pironi (F)
Ferrari 126 C/051:
spare.

Chassis 052 and 051 were both fitted with hydro-pneumatic suspension systems. These two chassis were also fitted with spacers between engine and gearbox which lengthened the wheelbase. The long wheelbase versions had been tested at Imola but were not used during the race, but this time both drivers preferred the longer cars. However, they both had to use the spare car, Villeneuve when he broke a driveshaft, and Pironi when he had gearbox trouble. Pironi wasn't too confident of the hydraulic suspension system and didn't use it during the race, unlike Villeneuve. The problem was that the cars wouldn't rise up again when they slowed. But like most other teams, Ferrari had a check system for the drivers in the cockpit. It consisted of a little Italian flag with an arrow. When the arrow pointed to green, it was alright to come into the pits. When it was on white, or worse still, red, it was inadvisable to pit.
Pironi made a tremendous start, leading into the first corner and staying in front for 12 laps until brake trouble intervened, and he slowly dropped back through the field, ending up eighth. Villeneuve also had brake trouble, but less severe, and he finished a good fourth.

AUTODELTA ALFA ROMEO

Alfa Romeo 179 C/02:
Mario Andretti (USA)
Alfa Romeo 179 C/01:
Bruno Giacomelli (I)
Alfa Romeo 179 B/03:
Andretti's spare
Alfa Romeo 179 B/06:
Giacomelli's spare.

The Alfa Romeo brought four cars to Zolder: two of last year's models, and two of this years. If that wasn't enough, they were fitted with three different types of hydro-pneumatic suspension: one type fitted to one of the spares, and different models for each of the drivers. None of the various types gave any trouble, but it took the Alfa team a long time to decide which skirts to use. There was a whole range to chose from, but the harder ones broke up after a few laps, and the softer ones were sucked under the car. Finally, the team opted for skirts inclined at 45 degrees as on the Brabhams.
On the Friday, the drivers used the cars that were so competitive last year, but springs were too hard to obtain reasonable ground effect. The next day, the drivers tried the latest cars, but there was little difference between the two. They stuck with the 179Cs for the race because it seemed a better bet and was politically a better idea. Both Giacomelli and Andretti managed to finish in the first ten, but they were one and two laps behind the winner respectively.

MARLBORO MCLAREN

McLaren-Ford MP4/2:
John Watson (GB)
McLaren-Ford MP4/1:
Watson's spare.
McLaren-Ford M 29/4:
Andrea de Cesaris (I)

John Watson again had two MP4s at his disposal, the spare weighing 15 kilos more than the race car as it was still fitted with older and heavier spares. Before coming to Zolder, the Ulsterman had tested various different suspension set-ups. The McLaren team want to get the right suspension set-up before adopting a hydro-pneumatic system. On Friday, Watson went off the track at the first corner and had to use the spare car. De Cesaris had the engine break in his M29 and was late out in the afternoon. The Italian was using one of the better M29s, as driven by Watson earlier in the season. It was fitted with an MP4-type front wing. But Andrea was never a front runner as at Imola, and he retired with gearbox trouble during the early stages. Watson qualified an excellent fifth quickest, ran well during the early stages only to lose fourth gear for a few laps which cost him a place in the points: he finished seventh.

TYRRELL

Tyrrell-Ford 010/3-6:
Eddie Cheever (USA)
Tyrrell-Ford 010/2:
Michele Alboreto (I)
Tyrrell-Ford 010/1:
spare.

All three Tyrrells were fitted with hydro-pneumatic suspension following some successful testing by Eddie Cheever at Silverstone the week before the Grand Prix. Cheever admitted that the system made it difficult to set up the car, and the suspension was on the bump stops in a straight line.
As on the Fittipaldi's, the suspension system is operated from the gearbox. The drivers have to engage first gear for the suspension to rise again. Cheever had no major problems but he was lucky to pick up a point for sixth place. His engine expired on the last lap, but as the race distance was taken from the lap before, Cheever kept his position. Alboreto was unwell on the Friday when he set a time that put him on the tenth row, but he'd recovered for the race and finished.

FITTIPALDI

Fittipaldi-Ford F8C/3:
Keke Rosberg (SF)
Fittipaldi-Ford F8C/4:
Chico Serra (BR)
Fittipaldi-Ford F8C/2:
spare.

The Brazilian team has financial problems: there was only one spare engine in the team's truck. Both cars were fitted with hydraulic suspension, but Serra didn't have the check system fitted in the cockpit. The Fittipaldi hydro-pneumatic system works off the gearbox. In first gear, the car stays the obligatory six centimeters off the ground, but in the other gears, it drops down. Rosberg started well from the sixth row of the grid, but retired early on when the gear linkage broke. Serra retired shortly before half distance with a broken engine.

DENIM OSELLA

Osella-Ford A1/03:
Beppe Gabbiani (I)
Osella-Ford A1/04:
Piercarlo Ghinzani (I)
Osella-Ford A1/01:
spare.

Ghinzani had an entirely new chassis for his Formula 1 debut, Guerra's having been destroyed against the Imola guardrail. Gabbiani had a variable suspension system which consisted of a twin spring. The first spring lowered the bodywork, the second spring comprised the normal suspension. But by Saturday Gabbiani had had enough of the system, because the front of the car tended to lift in fast corners. Both cars managed to qualify, but perhaps it was thanks to the rain coming on the Saturday. During the race, Gabbiani's engine broke, while Ghinzani lost his rear wing in a spin and had to have it changed. But at least he finished his first Formula 1 race, if only in last place, four laps behind the winner.

ENSIGN

Ensign-Ford MN 180 B/14:
Marc Surer (CH)

Finance is still the Ensign team's greatest problem. Surer had one spare engine at Zolder and that had a fair number of miles on it already. The car weighs 610 kilos which is on the heavy side, and now all development has been halted through lack of funds. But Surer qualified on the eighth row which is a feat in itself. He bent a new front wing against Rebaque's Brabham during the early stages, but it bent back with downforce, and in the end, he brought the car home in eleventh place with a badly misfiring engine which hurt his neck.

PARMALAT BRABHAM

Brabham-Ford BT 49/11:
Nelson Piquet (BR)
Brabham-Ford BT 49/12:
Hector Rebaque (MEX)
Brabham-Ford BT 49/9:
spare.

All three Brabhams were fitted with their own hydro-pneumatic suspension system as seen at Imola: a seperate suspension link operate by a hydraulic cylinder, plus flexible skirts sticking out at 45 degrees to the side pods. On Friday morning, Piquet tried carbon fibre discs on the spare car, but he went off the road because the spare wasn't set up properly.
In the race, Piquet retired on the eleventh lap after tangling with Jones, while Rebaque was in eighth place when he went off the road after the brakes failed.

RENAULT ELF

Renault RE 30:
René Arnoux (F)
Renault RE 30:
Alain Prost (F)
Renault RE 26B:
Arnoux's spare
Renault RE 22B:
Prost's spare.

The team brought two new cars and two old to Zolder. The drivers tried the new cars on the Friday, but despite all their testing, they weren't at all set up for the track and were hard to adjust. Arnoux tried a brake servo system on his newer and lighter car on the Friday, but not the hydro-pneumatic system, and he failed to qualify. Prost had neither fitted to his car, but qualified and then used the older car on the Saturday, and decided to race it. His clutch failed to survive two standing starts and he retired on the second lap.

MARCH GRAND PRIX

March-Ford 811/05:
Derek Daly (IRL)
March-Ford 811/04:
Eliseo Salazar (RCH)
March-Ford 811/01:
spare.

John McDonald brought two entirely new and untested Marchs to Zolder, the cars designed by Alan Mertens in collaboration with Robin Herd and Gordon Coppuck. The only parts "borrowed" from the old car were the uprights. A honeycomb chassis was incorporated in order to gain rigidity. The bodywork was also slightly different. Daly would have qualified but for his car being found to be too low throughout practice, but by Saturday morning, both drivers were among the 24 fastest. The next objective is to qualify at Monaco.

ATS WHEELS

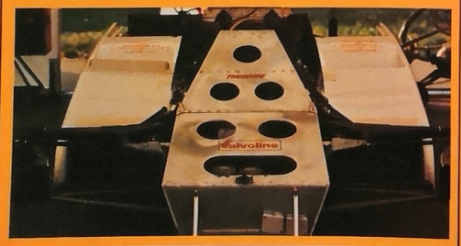
ATS-Ford D4/05:
Slim Borgudd (S)
ATS-Ford HGS/1:
spare.

The ATS team now has a new driver, new car and new personnel. Borgudd failed to qualify in the older D4, but the new car arrived on Friday evening. It has been designed by Herve Guilpin and has a new but traditional chassis. The wheelbase is 2760 mm; front track, 1812 mm; rear track, 1615 mm. The car is 25 kilos lighter than the D4, even though the hydraulic suspension system weighs 12 kilos. The suspension is entirely new, although the bodywork looks similar to the older car. The team is almost entirely German, led by Gunther Richter and his Formula 2 team.

THEODORE RACING

Theodore-Ford TY 01/1:
Patrick Tambay (F)

Tambay scarcely had time to try out new suspension with revised lower wishbones plus new anti-roll bars and springs. A second chassis will be on hand at Monaco where the team will have a better chance to qualify. However, hydro-pneumatic suspension won't be fitted until it works perfectly; its weight is a considerable handicap.



RAGNO BETA ARROWS

Arrows-Ford A3/5:
Riccardo Patrese (I)
Arrows-Ford A3/6:
Siegfried Stohr (I)
Arrows-Ford A3/2:
spare.

Dave Wass had completely redesigned the Arrows hydro-pneumatic suspension system which gave trouble at Imola. It was entirely different apart from the hydraulic cylinders which still worked with the combined spring/shock absorbers. Wass was very confident that this new system would work, and the team's mechanics jealously guarded all details. However, the system is housed in the right-hand side pod of the Arrows and is uniquely hydraulic, without use of compressed air.
Patrese had a number of problems with the system on Friday, but those were cured for Saturday. Stohr's car didn't have the same system, and he crashed on Saturday morning, his engine having broken the previous day. Both Arrows were set up with very little wing which caused understeer in the slower corners. But they qualified well. They should have new suspension and a new gearbox for Spain. Both cars were sadly eliminated in the startline shunt.

CANDY TOLEMAN

Toleman-Hart TG 181/2:
Brian Henton (GB)
Toleman-Hart TG 181/1:
Derek Warwick (GB)

There were detailed modifications made to the British cars: new engine cover, aerodynamics and rear suspension. Henton's car had more improvements, such as a secondary intercooler situated under the original model, as well as a ventilator. This brought down the temperature of the mixture entering the engine to 54 degrees. After Zolder, the team was fuel consumption testing at Silverstone, in preparation for a new Garrett turbo. This has been specially prepared in America for the Toleman team, and should reduce the turbo lag. The team hopes that overheating problems will also be solved, and a new car is being built around this single turbo Hart engine. It will be lighter, slimmer and aerodynamically improved and will probably appear in Spain.

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